ROOFING TODAY

The trade magazine for UK roofing, cladding and insulation professionals

Issue 127: November-December 2026



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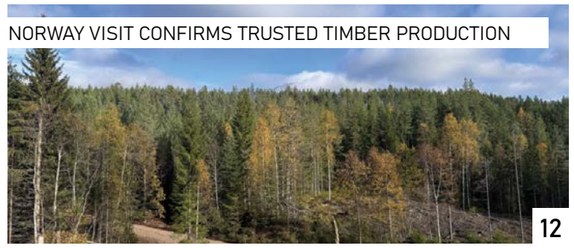
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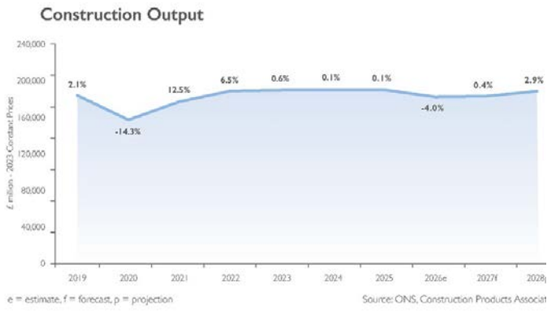
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CPA Says Construction Outlook for 2027 Worsens due to Rising Inflation Risks

The Construction Products Association's Autumn forecast revises down construction growth for the rest of this year and 2027, with the largest impacts on demand in the two largest sectors: private housing new build and repair, maintenance and improvement (rm&i).



Total construction output is expected to contract by 4.0% in 2026 and rise by only 0.4% in 2027. This is a revision down from a fall of 3.3% expected in 2026 and a rise of 1.2% forecast for 2027 in summer.

Private Housing

Private housing is the largest construction sector and house builders continue to report that homebuyer demand and house building activity have weakened since spring, in line with the increase in mortgage interest rates since the Middle East conflict. Further rises in mortgage interest rates from September, combined with higher oil and energy costs, are likely to worsen affordability on the demand side and costs and site viability on the supply side over the next 6-9 months, the CPA says.

It adds that the government's announcement of the 'Your First Home' equity loan scheme may provide a near-term boost to deposit affordability, but the issue of longer-term mortgage repayment affordability will remain a significant downside risk to demand. After an estimated 10.0% fall this year, output is now forecast to fall 3.0% in 2027.

Private Housing RM&I

Private housing repair, maintenance, and improvement (rm&i) is the second-largest construction sector and spending on major home improvements is another area where higher inflation and interest rates are expected to constrain activity by homeowners.

Basic repairs and maintenance activities have remained consistent throughout the year, and solar photovoltaic (PV), heat pump installation and fire safety remediation continue to provide growth but overall sector output is forecast to fall by 8.0% in 2026 and a further 2.0% in 2027.

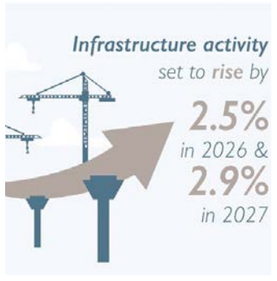
Infrastructure

In infrastructure, the third-largest construction sector, concerns have grown about potential delays and cancellations of road projects as tight government finances are redirected. In addition, there is concern that the delayed 'HS2 reset' will see activity on new contracts spread out over a greater number of years to reduce annual spending.

However, growth is still forecast over the forecast period, given longer-term existing contracts, pipelines of activity and funding in place for future projects in energy generation, National Grid distribution work and water investment, offsetting declines in road and rail. Sector output is forecast to rise by 2.5% in 2026, down from 3.2% in summer, and by 2.9% in 2027, down from 3.2% in summer.







NFRC Campaign Helps Roofers Weather the Storm

The National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) has launched Weather the Storm, the third and final campaign of its Health, Safety and Wellbeing strategy.

On a roof, tiredness, distraction, stress or feeling overwhelmed can affect judgement, communication, balance, concentration and decision-making. That matters because one lapse can have serious, sometimes fatal, consequences.

The campaign provides practical advice, tools and guidance to enable people to feel confident about how to prioritise wellbeing, recognise the signs of themselves or someone else in need, and know where to go for help and support.

The key theme of the campaign is a 'check-in scale', designed as a wellbeing forecast from sunshine to stormy.

NFRC's Joanne Lear, said "We wanted to create something that roofers could relate to, and came up with the idea of a wellbeing forecast. Working on a roof means paying close attention to the weather conditions to stay safe, but wellbeing is equally important".

Pledge your support: https://www.nfrc.co.uk/knowledge/campaigns/weather-the-storm.html

CMA Fines Roofing Firm and Staff for Hiding Evidence During School Bid Rigging Investigation Inspection

Roofing firm M&J Group and two staff members have been fined a total of £50,000 for hiding a mobile phone and documents during an inspection by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), in breach of clear instructions.

The CMA carried out the inspection of the M&J Group business premises under a court warrant as part of its investigation into 12 construction companies suspected of bid rigging for private and public sector contracts including under the Condition Improvement Fund.

Concealing Evidence

During the inspection, M&J's Estimating Director, Barry Pirrie, instructed M&J's Office Manager, Tracey Woods, to remove a work mobile phone and paperwork from the company's premises to prevent the evidence from being found by CMA investigators.

Barry Pirrie also falsely told CMA officers that he did not have a work mobile phone. The items were later brought back and handed over on the same day.



The CMA said concealing the evidence, even temporarily, risked the loss of relevant information, and wasted valuable investigative time and resource. The CMA imposed fines on:

- Barry Pirrie: £20,000
- Tracey Woods: £5,000
- M&J: £25,000

The CMA says no assumptions should be made about the outcome of its ongoing bid rigging investigation.

Roofers Need Level 3 for Supervisory Progression say Roofing Tutors

College roofing tutors are calling for a Level 3 roofing apprenticeship standard. They warn that the industry has no structured progression route for qualified roofers who are already taking on supervisory responsibility.

At the recent roofing tutor forum, hosted annually by BMI UK & Ireland, tutors described a clear gap once apprentices complete their Level 2. There is no formal next step between qualified tradesperson and site management, they said, yet many newly qualified roofers are already mentoring and directing newer apprentices on site without the training or recognition to do so confidently.



Skills Needed

Tutors were clear that a Level 3 should not be treated as a heritage or specialist qualification, which has historically limited demand and made courses difficult for colleges to justify. Instead, they argued, it should be built around the skills the industry needs now, including supervising teams, estimating, planning work and leading others on site.

BMI UK & Ireland is backing the tutors' call and urging Skills England to work with colleges, employers and industry to develop a new Level 3 standard.

Stuart Farndell, Lead Technical Trainer at BMI, said: "The people training the next generation of roofers are telling us that there's a missing rung on the career ladder, and we think they're right.

"Young roofers are being asked to take responsibility for others on site, but there's no qualification that recognises or supports that step.

"Good supervision is what makes sure a roof is installed properly and performs as it should. But this supervision is only as good as the training we support it with.

"At a time when the industry is losing experienced people faster than it can replace them, we can't afford to give talented roofers a reason to look elsewhere," Stuart concluded.

Genius Roof Solutions Plans Growth with Equity Investment



Genius Roof Solutions, the Lancashire-based manufacturer and supplier of roofing and solar installation products, has sold a majority stake in the business to BCF Equity Partners.

The sale provides "substantial value" for the Hall family, says Logros Advisory Partners who advised the shareholders on the investment.

The family will retain an interest in the business, while BCF Equity Partners will support the existing management team, led by Liz Cammack, Jemma Green and Julia White.

Genius Roof Solutions began in 1996, when roofer Jimmy Hall invented the original Hallclip designed to make roofing installation simpler, safer and more efficient. Building on that, the family established the business in 2004 and developed a portfolio of specialist products serving roofing and solar installation markets.

The Hall family expects the move to accelerate the company's development, expand its market presence and build on the strength of its product portfolio.

Jimmy Hall said, "I'm incredibly proud of what we've built as a family. The transaction marks an exciting new chapter, and I'm delighted that BCF Equity Partners will be supporting the team as they take the business forward."

Hodgson Sayers Begins New Chapter with United Infrastructure



United Infrastructure has acquired Stanley-based specialist roofing contractor, Hodgson Sayers.

Founded in 1979, Hodgson Sayers specialises in roofing, building envelope and civils work, metalwork and fabrication, and security products.

United Infrastructure says the acquisition is a further step in its growth across the power and social infrastructure markets, bringing specialist roofing and building envelope capability in-house and helping to deliver end-to-end solutions.

Neil Armstrong, Chair and CEO of United Infrastructure, said: "This acquisition is a strong strategic fit for UI, adding valuable roofing and building-fabric expertise to our growing power and social infrastructure capability.

Billy Hodgson, Chair and Founder added: "Having started the business from humble beginnings in 1979, it has given me enormous pride to grow it to the successful organisation that it is today, itself a testament to the hard work, talent, and loyalty of our team, and to the clients who have trusted us over the years.

"United Infrastructure shares our values and our commitment to quality and service, and joining them marks the start of an exciting new chapter, giving us access to greater resources and expertise, a wider network, and the scale to accelerate our next phase of growth. I'm hugely excited about what we can achieve together."

Cardo Group Acquires Norfolk Roofing and Maintenance Contractor

Cardo Group has acquired roofing and building maintenance specialist, Aspect Group Services, headquartered in Wymondham, Norfolk.

Founded in 1972 as a roofing contractor it offers pitched and flat roofing, property maintenance, and renewable energy solutions. The company, which had revenue of £20,452,646 year ending 30 April 2026, operates in the private, commercial, and public sectors.

This latest acquisition strengthens Cardo Group's maintenance and renewables capability and follows its acquisition of Breyer's roofing division after Breyer entered into administration in 2025.

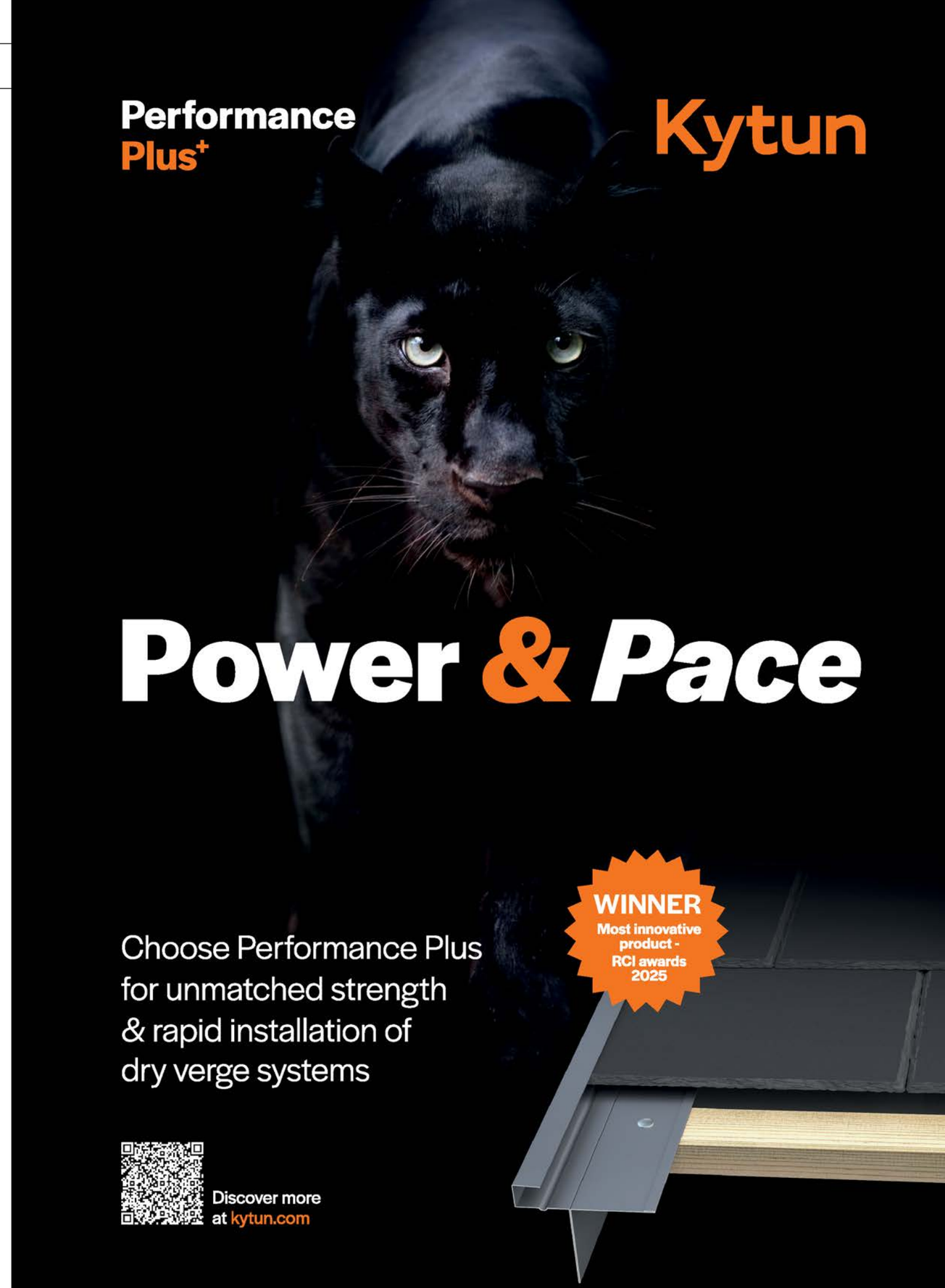
Matt Dillon, Aspect Group Services MD, said: "Joining Cardo Group marks an exciting new chapter. This partnership will allow us to build on our heritage, strengthen the services we provide and create new opportunities for our staff and suppliers, while supported by the additional investment, capability and expertise of the wider Cardo Group."

Cardo Group has seen meteoric expansion since it first opened in Barry, Wales in 2012. In 2026, Cardo Group's turnover was £239 million and profit before tax was £9.5 million.

Liam Bevan, CEO of Cardo Group, said: "Aspect Group Services is a strong addition to Cardo Group, bringing highly regarded expertise across roofing and building maintenance and its track record as a leading provider of property services in East Anglia.

"We look forward to welcoming Matt and the entire Aspect team to Cardo Group. Together we will continue to invest in excellent service delivery, while retaining the specialist knowledge and regional focus that are key to delivering essential property services well."





LifestilesAcquires Primera Slate



Lifestiles has acquired Primera Slate, bringing together two businesses which share a similar approach to sourcing specialist natural roofing materials. Primera's established quarry relationships and knowledge of Spanish slate complement Lifestiles' existing experience supplying roofing products, including handmade clay roof tiles, to private clients, trade customers and retail merchants across the UK.

Steve Harding, who built Primera Slate as a specialist importer and supplier of natural Spanish slate will remain involved. He said, "I'm proud of the reputation Primera has built over the years, so finding the right home for the business was incredibly important to me. I'm confident Lifestiles will build on what we've created while taking Primera forward."

Dave, co-owner of Lifestiles, said: "Steve has built strong relationships with suppliers and customers over many years, and that knowledge is hugely valuable. We're looking forward to carrying that forward while continuing to develop the wider Lifestiles offering."

Mike, co-owner of Lifestiles, added: "This is another important step for Lifestiles. We've always been focused on finding the right products, working with trusted suppliers and giving customers the level of service and knowledge they expect from us. Primera fits very naturally with that approach. We're bringing together complementary experience and expertise, while keeping the qualities and relationships that have made Primera successful. We're excited about what this means for the future and for our customers."

Roofbase Reaches 10-Branch Milestone with Sheffield Branch



Roofbase, the independent specialist roofing merchant, plans to open a new branch in Sheffield in January 2027, marking a significant milestone as the business expands to 10 branches.

With further branch openings planned for 2027, the new Sheffield location represents another step in Roofbase's continued growth, since 2017. The company attributes its success to supplying quality roofing materials, employing teams with experience from both the contractor and merchant sides of the industry, offering customers practical advice and a clear understanding of the needs of the trade.

Exciting Milestone

Steve Lloyd, Managing Director of Roofbase, said: "Opening in Sheffield and reaching our tenth branch is an exciting milestone for Roofbase. This marks the beginning of our expansion into the North, and with further branches planned, we're looking forward to bringing the Roofbase offering to more trade customers across the region while maintaining the personal service and expertise that sets us apart as an independent merchant."

The Sheffield branch will be located at 22 Atlas Way, Sheffield S4 7QQ and will offer a range of products for pitched and flat roofing projects.

Leading Roofbase's expansion into the North is Tom Sadler, Commercial Manager North, who brings over 20 years of experience in the roofing and builders' merchant industry. Tom will oversee the Sheffield branch and lead the development of Roofbase's northern network.

Flat Roofing Specialist Secures Six Figure Loan for AI Survey Tech

Midlands flat roofing specialist Hera Waterproofing secured a £400,000 loan facility with HSBC UK bank to develop its own AI software to help manage roofing surveys.

Hera Waterproofing, which refurbishes commercial and industrial flat roofs, uses AI to analyse the results of condition surveys of large, complex estates. Building 3D digital twins to help clients understand the scale and detail of projects, AI helps to highlights defects, provides project insights and suggests solutions.



The company will use the funding to accelerate development of CoreOS, its AI platform for building surveyors. CoreOS assembles building information from multiple systems and presents it as a unified view of complex property portfolios, making it easier to assess building condition and prioritise maintenance tasks.

The deal refinanced existing lending from HSBC UK bank to help the company grow and aid increasing imports of specialist waterproofing materials.



New COO for Wienerberger



Simon Nevitt succeeds Keith Barker as Chief Operating Officer of wienerberger UK & Ireland from 1 November 2026, following Keith's retirement. Keith will remain with the business until the end of the year to ensure a smooth handover.

Simon Nevitt takes on the role after eight years with wienerberger both as Operations Director and Chief Development Officer

Simon said, "Thanks to the work of Keith and our colleagues, together we have built a more resilient business, expanded our capabilities and created exciting opportunities across wall, roof, water and heating.

"While the construction industry continues to navigate challenging market conditions, working alongside a talented executive team, my focus will be on supporting our customers, investing in our people and continuing to build for what's next."

Keith Barker retires after 16 years with wienerberger, including 9 years as MD. His tenure included acquisition of Building Product Design, while FloPlast, Cork Plastics and Maincor forms today's water and heating division.

Keith Barker said, "Simon was the natural choice to lead the business forward. I leave knowing the business is in a strong position, with a clear strategy and a talented leadership team."

MOY Group Appoints New CEO



MOY Group has appointed Kelly Phillips as its new Chief Executive Officer. Phillips has been promoted from her prior role of Chief Growth Officer.

Current CEO, Cathal Quinn will continue to serve the company as Chairman. Cathal commented, "Kelly is an extraordinary leader whose impact on MOY has been immense since she joined us. She is deeply connected to our clients, people and partners, understands our markets and has played a central role in shaping the growth strategy.

"Collaborating with Kelly has been an incredible partnership, and there is no better person to lead MOY into its next phase of global growth. I am excited to continue supporting her as Chairman, with my focus moving towards the long-term opportunities for MOY and our industry."

MOY Group is a roofing supplier to global companies, and since it was founded in 1979, the company has grown its footprint from its roots in Ireland to an international presence in 19 countries across EMEA and North America.

"It is an honour to build on the incredible legacy that Cathal and our CIO, Brian Conroy, have achieved," said Kelly Phillips. "Our clients count on us to protect their critical operations as if those facilities were our own. That will always be who MOY is."

Rockwool Welcomes New Commercial Director

ROCKWOOL UK & Ireland has appointed Melanie Marquard as Commercial Director to help deliver its growth strategy and strengthen its relationships with construction customers and partners.

Melanie joins ROCKWOOL from Protan, a Scandinavian manufacturer of roofing membranes and a ROCKWOOL customer. She has worked in construction for 25 years, with experience in the building materials sector, most recently serving as Protan MD for Western Europe.

Her appointment comes as ROCKWOOL continues to invest and expand, including plans for a new factory in the West Midlands, plus continued investment at its stone wool production facility in South Wales.

Melanie said: "Having worked with ROCKWOOL from a customer perspective, I have seen the value of its expertise and the strength of its relationships across the industry. I'm excited to be joining ROCKWOOL at this pivotal time and look forward to building on those relationships, while identifying new opportunities to support our customers and partners through strong customer service, technical expertise and product innovation."



Nick Wilson, MD of ROCKWOOL UK & Ireland, added: "Melanie's extensive industry expertise, combined with the strong network she has built across the construction sector, will be instrumental in helping ROCKWOOL achieve its growth ambitions. Her experience will bring valuable insight to the business."

Our clients keep returning time and time and time and time again.

Except for our first customer, Len.
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Norway Visit Confirms Trusted Timber Production of JB Red Roofing Batten

In these days of Building Safety Act compliance, stringent standards and sustainability requirements, roofing contractors increasingly need to apply a forensic scrutiny to the credentials of the batten they buy and trust their safety to. So when Marley invited Roofing Today to accompany them on a visit to one of their timber suppliers, Moelven Industrier ASA in Norway and Sweden, it seemed the perfect opportunity to examine the transparency, traceability and accountability of the timber supply chain that produces JB Red battens.

Roofing Today's visit to the forests supplying timber for JB Red roofing battens began in Sweden, where we arrived at one of the abundant forested hillsides of spruce and pine trees. The cold climate means these trees grow slowly, producing tighter growth rings and denser, stronger timber. Here, the timber harvesting process was already underway.

Harvesting is a year-round activity which peaks in autumn and winter as the trees enter their dormant period and access is made easier by the ground freezing hard as the temperature drops. A standing of mature trees around 60-80 years old is selected and the trees are de-branched and felled mechanically in one go.

This efficiency is important in the current market of lower supply due to hotter growing conditions, stormier winters and the threat of bark beetle, all of which has destabilised the timber commodity market in recent years.

Harvesting

The purchase and felling of the trees is undertaken by Moelven Industrier ASA, one of Europe's largest producers of timber, and suppliers to Marley. The Norwegian headquartered company buys the rights to tree felling from the forests' owners – in Sweden often the church, state or private forest owners in Norway more usually private-owned estates.

Intention to harvest must be notified to the state by law, and the records created form part of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) chain of custody requirements, guaranteeing sustainable and responsible forestry practices. Not only are these demanded by Marley for its PEFC certificate, but they also feed into JB Red battens' compliance with the Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI) – which the company was the first to achieve in the UK – as well as the product's BBA certificate.



Articulated lorries transporting timber logs to sawmills are a familiar sight on the roads of Norway and Sweden. Sawmills are strategically located throughout timber-producing regions to minimise transport distances.

Scandinavian forests grow both the native red pine and white spruce species, the latter identified by its Christmas tree appearance and, from which, JB Red battens are produced. As the trees are felled, the branches are left to enrich the soil, while some tree stumps are preserved to provide food and habitat for insects and birds as they decay.

Transport of the logs from the forest, to one of the six Moelven sawmills supplying Marley across Sweden and Norway, is by articulated lorry – a very common sight on the region's relatively empty and impressively well maintained roads, even in the depths of its snowbound winters when temperatures can fall to as low as -40°C.

Because the sawmills are located across the forested regions, the timber's carbon miles are limited, with a supplying radius for each sawmill of typically 35-80km.

Processing

When the logs arrive at the sawmill, they are stacked by a log handler in 60 tonne bundles into huge piles ready for processing.

Accompanied to the Notnäs sawmill in Torsby by Pehr Eriksson and Simon Paz from Moelven UK, we witnessed the first operation of loading the logs onto the production line, where they are separated by huge rollers in order to be de-barked.

Marley roofing battens are exclusively produced from the 'sideboards', the area of the log surrounding the middle section, which provides the most mature, stable and straightest sections of timber.

Grading

As the timber moves through the line, a series of cameras examine the sideboards for waning and determines the best cutting pattern. This is the first grading of the batten timber.

After the timber is sawn, it is kiln dried to ensure a moisture content below 20%. Then it is camera graded again, and only if the wood is within the permitted quality standards is it exported by ship to Immingham and transported onto Marley's Gainsborough site. Here a final grading is carried out by Marley's 'Golden Eye' at the JB Red manufacturing plant, for production of BS5534 graded batten.

Just over half of Moelven's two million m³ annual production of timber is processed in this way, meaning there's a lot of unused product. However, this wood does not go to ||-

Only if the wood is within the permitted quality standards is it exported by ship to Immingham and transported onto Marley's Gainsborough site.



The loghandler stacking the logs into vast piles ready for processing.



Production starts with debarking the timber logs.



Roofing battens are made from sideboards - the outer boards cut from either side of the central log section.



The sideboards are trimmed to the required lengths.



Kilns dry the wood and are fuelled by the sawmill waste wood.



A series of cameras inspect the wood for wane and other characteristics.



Production is overseen by a supervisor as a second line of quality control.

waste. At Moelven's largest Norwegian sawmill at Våler we saw it being processed into chips to fuel the sawmill's biomass boiler which heats the kiln, bark for landscaping products or into cellulose for pulp and paper production.

Moelven's manufacture of glulam products was highlighted on the visit with an overnight stay at Norway's Mjøstårnet, a hotel overlooking lake Mjøsa. It is the tallest timber building in Europe rising 18 stories high and the structure is engineered from Moelven's glulam.

Despite Moelven Industrier's £1.2 billion turnover, 2,953 employees and 35 production sites, Lars Grotta, Sales Director at Våler, sums up its operations in disarmingly simple terms: "we do the same at all our sawmills: we take something round and make it square".

Re-Planting

Yet this belies the huge effort the company contributes to in Norway and Sweden, to ensure its forestry industry is sustainable. This became an international focus across Scandinavia in the 1960's after it was realised that re-planting rates were not keeping pace with harvests.

Between 55-60 million new trees are now grown in Norway every year, with the ultimate aim of doubling the total tree cover in the country within 90 years. This project has united Norway's forestry industry into an association steering delivery of 400 million trees replanted in the past eight years alone.

Production of spruce and pine seedlings (80%:20% respectively) takes place at a dedicated nursery near Mjøsbruket, one of five in Norway. There, 22 million seedlings are grown annually, almost half of Norway's requirement.

Between 55-60 million new trees are now grown in Norway every year, with the ultimate aim of doubling the total tree cover in the country within 90 years.

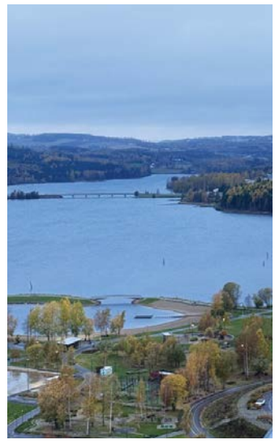
Batches of 3 million seeds are sown into plugs and the seedlings are grown in greenhouses during the first year. They are moved into dark sheds kept at -4°C through the winter to induce the dormancy period necessary for strong plants while protecting them from the considerably colder outdoor winter temperatures.

In their second spring, the saplings are placed outside. At this point the plants' roots used to be trimmed at their ends to stimulate longer growth. However, recent research revealed that climate change has meant it is more beneficial to encourage strong side roots to provide greater stability for mature trees in drier soils. Other research has shown that glueing sand to the vulnerable saplings' soft needles protects them from bark beetle and attack by other natural predators while they are young.

Such research, commissioned by the Norwegian Forestry Association, suggests the long term sustainability of Scandinavian timber production is assured. It also demonstrates the responsible and accountable nature of the industry valued by Marley as its UK customer. As the custodian of JB Red's long established UK reputation for reliable and trusted roofing batten, that's an inheritance Marley, together with its timber supplier, is assuredly committed to maintaining.



Mjøstårnet, the tallest timber building in Europe. The hotel overlooks the beautiful lake Mjøsa.



The view from the rooftop viewing platform of Mjøstårnet on the 18th floor.



Seedlings are stored in the dark at -4°C protected from Norway's winter temperatures.



The seedlings' needles have sand glued to them to protect them against attack while young.



22 million seedlings are grown annually at the nursery near Mjøsbruket, almost half of Norway's annual requirement.



Each greenhouse stores 3 million first-year seedlings, sown into trays of plugs.

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Profile: Matt Timby, NFRC Technical Manager - Pitched Roofing & Hard Metals

Supporting members is at the heart of Matt Timby's new role, following his appointment to the National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) Technical and Training Team at the beginning of September.

Despite spending 20 years on the tools, in some ways it's been an easy transition for Matt. He knows the existing four NFRC Technical Team members well, having been frequently co-opted as a judge for the annual Skillbuild finals and the Great British Slate Off. He has also helped train and mentor the GB team taking part in the IFD's World Championship for Young Roofers.

Matt was the perfect fit for these roles, having twice been a Skillbuild gold medal winner himself in 2009 and 2010. He was also awarded the Mason Elliot Award, and took home the prestigious IFD World Championship for Young Roofers title in 2010 and President's Award in 2012.

After completing his training to level 3, Matt also won a place on the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment Master Craftsman Programme, the first time roofers had participated in this hugely prestigious heritage conservation programme. After a year of travelling to heritage sites, Matt set up his own company specialising in heritage roofing and leadwork.



Matt's leadwork on Somerton Castle that won the 2023 UK Roofing Award for Leadwork.

Based in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, Matt built a thriving business, training two apprentices (both attending Leeds College of Building, as he had). Projects included 13th C Somerton Castle, specialist leadwork, and Matt won numerous awards for his work, most recently the UK Roofing Award Small Scale Project (Under £25k) for St Andrews Bell Tower in 2024.

"I was always upskilling, picking up lots of training on the way," says Matt. "I've been under continuous professional development, developing my leadwork and hard metals knowledge and skills throughout the past 15 years really.



"Developing my skills has always been my passion, working with my hands, putting things together, and with that, gaining technical knowledge and understanding; that's what I've always found most rewarding."

As a roofing business owner, one of Matt's first acts was to join the NFRC, and he remained an active member, contributing his time and extensive knowledge as a trainer, coach, mentor and judge for the next generation of young roofers.

"That deepened my relationship with the NFRC, developing my admiration for what they do and getting to know the technical team well. I already felt I was part of the team even before I got this job. Coming off the tools, I thought it would be a massive shock not to be going to a project every day, but it's felt quite a natural and easy transition."

With such a track record, Matt's wide-ranging knowledge and experience make him a real asset on the Technical Team, where he deals with a hugely varied workload of technical enquiries from NFRC contractor members, covering everything from roofing details and specifications to onsite queries. Other queries come from the wider industry, as well as the public, on pitched roofing and hard metals. "It's a continual job of education really," explains Matt. "You can't know everything, so it's a combination of sharing your expertise and educating yourself sometimes along the way."

Heritage Roofing

One of Matt's first priorities in the job is developing and promoting the NFRC Heritage Register, a list of specialist NFRC members experienced and skilled in conservation roof work. Matt has already been busy writing a case study of the 2026 UK Roofing Award Project of the Year and Heritage category winner, Staick House, to help promote the NFRC Heritage Register and demonstrate how modern thermal standards can be achieved while maintaining conservation principles.

Matt's own experience of non-stop calls from his former customers highlights one of the main issues facing the heritage roofing sector: the national shortage of skilled workers. Part of the problem is funding; CoRE in Hereford is now the only training provider in the country offering Level 3 heritage roofing. Matt is keen to see new training formats, delivered in accessible 'bite-sized' chunks to encourage busy roofers to participate.

Standardising Details

Matt is also developing an NFRC Guidance Note (to add to the existing library of 167), this one on vernacular valleys. "It's nice to put down what you know on paper. It's different: I'm used to using this knowledge with my hands, now I'm sharing it with our members in writing."

Another aspect of the job is giving presentations and here Matt jumped straight into the deep end with a talk on roof detailing to a Tier 1 contractor. Alongside this, the NFRC Technical and Training Team has been working with the NHBC to identify common faults and help standardise details. "That's been incredibly interesting," says Matt. "I'm hoping to help them tackle their current areas of concern which will not only benefit them, and our members, but also the wider newbuild sector, including new homeowners.

I already felt I was part of the team even before I got this job. Coming off the tools, I thought it would be a massive shock not to be going to a project every day, but it's felt quite a natural and easy transition.

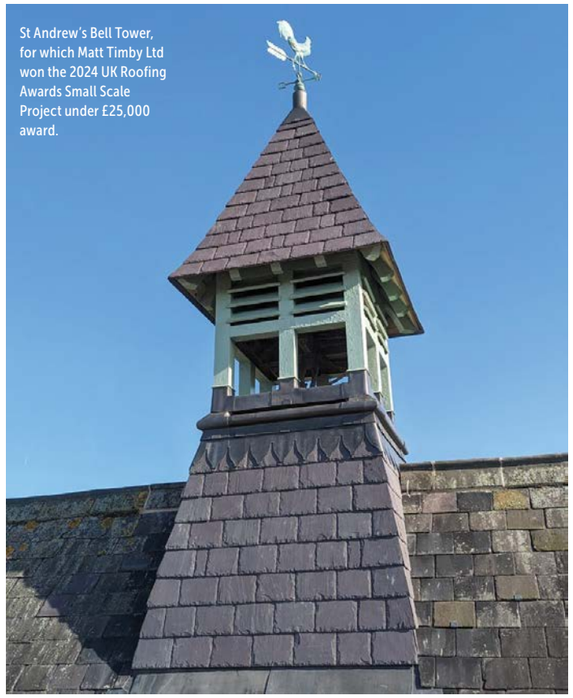


Celebrating completion of the rig at the 2024 IFD Young Roofers World Championship. (L:R) Bob Coutts, Coach; Tyler Norris from Karl Terry Roofing Contractors; Joe Gallagher from IH Gallagher Roofing Ltd; and Matt Timby, coach.

"There's a mixture of problems, one current one is the compatibility of materials, such as prefabricated dormers, within the wider spec. It involves sitting down with different manufacturers and contractors and trying to arrive at standardised solutions for problems before they arise. The key is communication with all parties, and that's a crucial part of the job.

"There was a recent case of weathering complex valley junctions that both the contractors and inspectors needed a reference point for. If you can standardise something by providing an example then it cuts out the doubt and gives everyone confidence the solution works and failures are avoided. That's where I feel I can really make a difference."

In the absence of a British Standard for fully supported metal roofing, there's another area of work for Matt in helping to formulate one, with the BSI and an industry lead committee. This will cover all the hard metals: copper, zinc, stainless steel, aluminium, and standing seam roofing.



St Andrew's Bell Tower, for which Matt Timby Ltd won the 2024 UK Roofing Awards Small Scale Project under £25,000 award.

Lead Work

Matt points out that lead already has a lot of existing guidance, although he shares the widespread concerns regarding HSE's proposed revision of lead-in-blood levels for workers to align with European standards, following its consultation this year.

Matt explains, "The worry is for heritage roofers and leadworkers who are exposed to lead every day. While their awareness of maintaining rigorous hygiene, correct PPE and clothes changing procedures is good, working on heritage sites can provide their own obstacles."

Another area of focus for Matt will be the retrofitting of rooftops with solar and he anticipates queries on this topic will really escalate next year with the launch of the Warm Homes Plan. "Getting it right will be crucial for roofers involved," Matt says. "Making sure the roof is suitably orientated, structurally sound, weathering details are correct, ventilation and insulation are adequate, will all be important.

"Again, with the Future Homes Standard, we need to be sure there's cohesion between the roofing industry and the housebuilders in their understanding."

Amidst all of this, promoting compliance with the Building Safety Act, requiring competence across all areas of roofing, is another priority. This is a key part of NFRC's longstanding commitment to professional roofing and one that it remains keen to support members with through Matt, and the rest of the NFRC Technical and Training Team, working to embed it in all parts of the UK roofing sector.

Navigating Evolving Technical Standards for the Fire Performance of Cladding and Roofing Systems



Carl Thompson, Technical Manager for CA Group provides an overview of important standards and regulatory updates in recent years. He outlines how manufacturers and specifiers are responding - and where, sometimes, they are not, highlighting the importance of understanding precisely the testing, fire resistance and reaction to fire standards and classifications that are being referred to in product and system literature.

Standards and regulations in relation to the Fire Performance of construction products and materials have been subject to significant change over the last nine years, and rightly so, given the underlying need for improvement and clarity. The Building Safety Act has placed growing emphasis on competence and liability, in particular for High Risk Buildings. However, even for 'simpler' buildings in the industrial and logistics sectors, there is an ever-changing landscape of regulation and performance standards to navigate.

Fire Resistance

Currently BS 476: Part 22, *Method for determination of the fire resistance of non-loadbearing elements of construction* remains a compliant means to demonstrate fire resistance performance in accordance with the current revision of Approved Document B Volume 2 (ADB), and will remain as such until 2 September 2029.

Cladding systems can be tested in accordance with BS 476: Part 22 or BS EN 1364-1 for fire resistance. The standards are also suitable to obtain assessment reports which extend the scope of application by determining the limits of the design, based on tested constructions and the performances obtained.

Assessment reports are written in accordance with the current relevant European Standard, BS EN 15725: 2010: *Extended application reports on the fire performance of construction products and building elements*. The purpose of such reports is to evaluate and positively appraise the fire performance of proposed elements based on the performance of several other elements when tested.

From 2 September 2029, BS 476: Part 22 will be effectively withdrawn from ADB as a valid method of demonstrating fire resistance, and 'the relevant European standard' will apply instead. This essentially means that BS EN 1364-1 *Fire resistance tests for non-loadbearing elements, Walls* will become the method for demonstrating fire resistance. In preparation for this change in 2029, cladding manufacturers are currently working towards re-testing and re-certifying all their fire resistance systems in accordance with the European standard.

Reaction to Fire

Since 2 March 2025 for England, BS 476 parts 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11 relating to reaction to fire have been withdrawn from ADB. Terminology such as 'Class 1' or 'Class 3' relating to BS 476-7 have also effectively been withdrawn.

Other 2019 amendments to Approved Document B, removed the classification '*Class O Surface*', often referred to '*Surface Spread of Flame*' - yet we still see this terminology used in specifications or referred to in product performance descriptions, despite it being entirely replaced by BS EN 13501-1 and BS EN 13501-5.

BS EN 13501-1 *Reaction to Fire* is commonly known as 'Euroclass' and categorises material as A1 non-combustible, A2 limited combustibility or classes B-F which are combustible categories. Other indices 's' and 'd' refer to the creation of smoke and burning droplets respectively. The 2019 revisions to ADB (England) laid out significant changes including the minimum BS EN 13501-1 Class B-s3, d2 requirement for all cladding above 18m for all types of building.





2019 amendments to Approved Document B, removed the classification 'Class O Surface' ... - yet we still see this terminology used in specifications or referred to in product performance descriptions, despite it being entirely replaced.

BS EN 13501-5 refers to roof coverings, with BROOF (t4) being the highest classification, and enables unrestricted use of systems that comply with this category.

It is important to understand that BS EN 13501-1 and -5 refer to tests on the product as it would leave the factory. Products that might be laminated or assembled away from site are tested as a whole rather than testing individual components, thereby giving a realistic gauge of their performance. This avoids historic issues whereby only the surfaces of products were tested, potentially leading to erroneous conclusions about the performance of the product as a whole. Should products be damaged on site causing internal elements to be exposed, then any testing to these standards may well be compromised.

Capable Member

The British Constructional Steelwork Association (BCSA) *Technical Specification – Boundary Elevations* publication came into effect from 1 July 2025. CA Group has participated in the industry-wide steering group that produced the document, which has been widely adopted across the industry. It is worth mentioning, however, that the document is non regulatory, does not provide a means of demonstrating compliance with building regulations, and is not normally part of building control approval process. The text addresses the means of providing adequate support for boundary firewall systems and applies only for single storey steel frame structures.

The technical specification puts an obligation on cladding system suppliers to advise on the location of 'capable members' which are fire protected sections offering support for the cladding firewall system. Typically, such members would be required at the top of supported 'protected area' systems, for example at the eaves and cill details (underneath ribbon windows). Manufacturers across the industry have varying recommendations, therefore the specified system manufacturer should be approached at an early stage in the design process to advise on capable member requirements.

As required in the document, the responsibility for the design of the capable member lies with the steelwork contractor. The main contractor is responsible for its means of fire protection.

[https://www.bcsa.org.uk/product/technical-specification-for-boundary-elevations-pdf/]

Other Changes to Building Regulations and Standards

The transition to BS EN standards away from historic national standards has several significant implications. These include an accelerated move away from organic plastisol coating for wall cladding, towards high-build PU coatings such as Tata Colorcoat Prisma. The fire performance of roof systems is also undergoing review, and ahead of any regulatory change there is plenty of opinion on the subject.

Stay Informed

Fire regulations, standards, legislation and industry best practice are constantly evolving, with implications that we all need to understand to an appropriate level. While the technical complexities mean that not everyone can be an expert, we each have a responsibility to develop a level of understanding that is appropriate to our role, responsibilities and place within the industry.

Gateway 2: Why Early Technical Engagement Matters More Than Ever

Recent industry data has highlighted an improvement in Gateway 2 approval rates for higher-risk buildings in England, providing a much-needed boost to confidence across the construction sector.

For an industry that has navigated a prolonged period of uncertainty, this uplift is particularly welcome. Over recent years, developers, contractors and manufacturers have faced a challenging combination of market volatility, fluctuating raw material costs, rising transportation expenses and increasing compliance requirements. Combined with the introduction of the Building Safety Act and the Gateway approval process, many projects have experienced delays as the market adapts to new regulatory expectations.

The increase in approvals suggests the industry is becoming more familiar with regulatory requirements, helping to unlock previously delayed schemes and improve confidence throughout the supply chain. As more projects progress through the approval process, the industry can begin to focus on delivering much needed housing, commercial developments and public infrastructure projects.

Supply Chain Partners

While this progress is undoubtedly positive, it also reinforces the importance of engaging competent and experienced supply chain partners from the earliest stages of a project. With a growing emphasis on design maturity, robust evidence and demonstrable competence, project teams can no longer afford to view waterproofing as a later-stage consideration.

For designers, developers, main contractors, roofing contractors and clients alike, early engagement with a knowledgeable waterproofing specialist can help ensure roofing solutions are compliant, practical and aligned with both performance requirements and regulatory expectations. Early collaboration can minimise redesign, reduce programme delays and support the creation of a stronger Golden Thread of information from the outset.

Responsive Support

For manufacturers such as Strata Waterproofing, these evolving requirements reinforce the importance of providing responsive, accessible technical support throughout the project journey. With an established technical infrastructure, independently accredited waterproofing systems and a collaborative approach to specification, the business is well positioned to help project teams navigate increasingly complex design and compliance requirements.

An important part of this approach is the Strata Technical Hub, which provides architects, specifiers and contractors with convenient access to specification guidance, technical resources, certification and compliance information. This supports the development of accurate, dependable and compliant waterproofing specifications from the earliest design stages.

Design Challenges

Further strengthening this offering, Strata Waterproofing has a dedicated team of Architectural Technicians who work closely with project teams throughout the design process. From initial concepts and system selection through to specification development, roofing build-ups, technical detailing and compliance guidance, the team provides practical support to architects, consultants, contractors and clients. By identifying potential design challenges early, advising on appropriate waterproofing solutions and helping ensure specifications are supported by the necessary technical evidence, the team can help reduce the risk of costly redesign, improve coordination between project stakeholders and support a smoother transition from design through to installation.



Early engagement with a knowledgeable waterproofing specialist can help ensure roofing solutions are compliant, practical and aligned with both performance requirements and regulatory expectations.

As Gateway 2 approvals continue to improve and confidence returns to the market, successful project delivery will depend upon early planning, design competence and the quality of information submitted. Engaging specialist waterproofing expertise from the outset not only supports regulatory compliance but also helps ensure projects are delivered safely, efficiently and with long-term performance at their core.

For an industry eager to regain momentum, maintaining this progress will require continued collaboration throughout the supply chain, with technical expertise and robust specification information playing an increasingly important role in delivering safer, higher-performing buildings. ■

To get in touch with Strata's technical team or to register for access to its Technical Hub, visit www.stratawaterproofing.com.



The Buyer's Guide to Roofing Battens: Quality and Compliance

Roofing battens may look like a relatively simple component, but their role in roof construction is critical. From supporting tiles and slates to providing a foothold for roofers during installation, correctly graded, sized and treated battens are essential for both roof performance and site safety.

All roofing battens should be graded to ensure they comply with BS5534.



In recent years, the NFRC has raised concerns about substandard battens being marked, coloured and sold as compliant with BS 5534, despite failing to meet the required standard.

Such counterfeit battens can create serious risks for roofing contractors and their customers. Battens that do not meet the required specifications may compromise the integrity of the finished roof and, in some circumstances, lead to costly remedial work, including stripping and re-roofing.

There is also an immediate health and safety concern. Roofers may walk, sit or lean on battens while installing slates or tiles. If a batten fails under this load, the consequences could be severe. Using non-compliant battens as footholds also conflicts with the guidance in HSG33: Health and Safety in Roofwork.

Buying the Right Batten

The first step to ensuring only compliant battens are purchased and used is to buy from reputable suppliers and request supporting product information before placing an order.

Roofing battens should not be offered in different grades or percentages of BS 5534 compliance. There is only one appropriate grade for roofing applications and all the battens offered should be 100% compliant with BS 5534. Any claims that a batten is partially compliant should ring alarm bells.

Many roofing batten brands are known by their colour but this characteristic has been used to deliberately pass off substandard products. Rather than rely on colour alone, buyers should check the markings, dimensions and supporting documentation of the product.

Markings and Dimensions

BS 5534 requires each batten to carry four key pieces of information:

- The Graded BS 5534 marking.
- The batten size.
- A four-digit species code.
- The manufacturer's identification.

Third-party quality assurance certification is not a requirement of the standard, but independent certification provides absolute peace of mind.

The Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI) provides another layer of assurance that all product claims are accurate and can be supported with evidence. There are only three batten producers in the UK with this assessment: RSG Timber, Marley and SR Timber.

Dimensions are equally important. BS 5534 specifies two standard batten sizes and their maximum spans:

- 50mm x 25mm: maximum span of 600mm.
- 38mm x 25mm: maximum span of 450mm.

At the reference moisture content of 20%, permitted dimensional tolerances are +/- 3mm for width and -0/+3mm for depth.

Roofing businesses should carry out spot checks on every delivery, paying particular attention to batten depth. Undersized products should be rejected, as insufficient depth can compromise both structural performance and roofer safety.

Preservative Treatment

Roofing battens must be pressure-impregnated with preservative to meet Use Class 2 requirements for a desired service life of 60 years.

Buyers should request a treatment certificate with each delivery, confirming compliance with BS 8417 and the specified treatment process.

Reject Failures

If markings, dimensions or documentation raise concerns, the supplier should be notified immediately and the purchase halted. Non-compliant battens should not be installed and be rejected from site.

For roofers, checking battens before work begins is a straightforward but essential step towards safer installations, fewer costly disputes and better-performing roofs. ■

Further guidance is available from Timber Development UK at https://timberdevelopment.uk/how-to-tell-if-your-roofing-battens-make-the-grade/.

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Single Sourcing Makes Life Easier for Contractors



Cedral, part of the expanding Etex Fibre Cement division, provides contractors with unrivalled solutions providing both fibre cement roofing slates and facade board. This offer is unique in the market, says Lisa Grosse, Product and Marketing Lead for Cedral UK and Ireland – who urges installers to leverage the benefits of single sourcing of these building products.

The popularity of fibre cement slates has grown recently as architects, contractors and homeowners have come to appreciate the aesthetic look, ease of installation and sustainable credentials of this material. A large proportion of new build developers now specify this material for residential projects and it is also increasingly prevalent in the domestic retrofit and replacement market.

Fibre cement slates perform well on key criteria including fire safety, protection against extreme weather, supporting energy efficiency, sustainability, maintenance and lifespan.

Cedral fibre cement slates are manufactured in the company's European plant to BS5534 standard, have an excellent fire performance classification of A2-s1, d0 and meet the strength requirements of BS EN 492.

We are seeing a shift away from other products such as concrete and natural slate as roofers appreciate the benefits of fibre cement slates.

Quick and Easy

Roofers also want a product that is easy to install. While Cedral's fibre cement slates are all pre-holed, most natural slate alternatives are not. Grading is another important consideration when using quarry products, as these need to be quality checked and sorted by thickness before a project commences. Fibre cement slates come in square or dressed edges, smooth or textured finishes and are available in a variety of colours such as Terracotta or Stone Green in addition to Blue-Black which mirrors the traditional slate grey colour. Cedral also provides an expanding range of fittings and accessories, including ridges and hips, ventilation slates, verges and fixings.





Ready for the Weather

Cedral slates are also a strong option for future-proofing residential roofs against extreme weather. Fibre cement is resistant to all kinds of weather, from severe frosts and torrential rain to high heat and direct sunlight. With heavier rainfall becoming more of the norm, the relative weight of the roofing can be a key consideration as well for decisions about what material to specify.

More severe weather patterns predicted by the Met Office have implications for the robustness of roofing materials and fixings. Older roof structures, for instance, may not have the capacity to support heavier tiles if there are more prolonged periods of stormy and wet weather. Fibre cement slates are consistently lighter yet as strong as clay, concrete and natural slate products. With the layered production and fibre matrix supporting the cement, fibre cement is thinner than concrete, but has the same performance benefits. They don't require a heavy load bearing roof construction, so less timber is required for the structure.

Increasing temperatures can cause blistering or cracking on roof tiles and slates, but fibre cement is highly resistant to intense temperature fluctuation with a minimum life expectancy of 50 years. It also withstands bacteria, algae and insects.

Good for the Planet

Nowadays, manufacturers need to make products that are recyclable, using less energy to reduce waste. Fibre cement is made of cement, water, cellulose, textile fibres and air – which can help improve circularity and reduce carbon impact.

Cedral products are installed with reversible fixings, giving them a potential second life.

The company has set ambitious targets which include zero waste and for the products to be fully recycled. The fibre cement roof slates have a carbon footprint of just 16 CO_2 e/m^2.

We anticipate that advances in sustainable construction will continue at a rapid pace, transforming home design and fibre cement roofing slates as an option for decisions about eco-friendly building processes and materials. ■

CEDRAL by etex

Why Cladding Selection Matters

Contractors are under pressure to deliver projects that combine aesthetic appeal, long-term durability and compliance. Whether working on residential developments, commercial schemes or refurbishment projects, choosing the right facade solution has never been more important. That is why more building contractors across the UK are turning to Cedral cladding as their preferred external facade system.

Choice is Crucial

Architects, developers and homeowners all want buildings that stand out visually while maintaining a clean, contemporary finish. Cedral gives contractors the flexibility to meet those expectations with one of the most extensive ranges on the market.

Cedral cladding is available in both Lap and Click formats, allowing contractors to achieve either a traditional overlapping appearance or a sleek, flush-fitting contemporary finish. This versatility makes the product suitable for a wide range of projects and architectural styles.

In addition, Cedral offers an impressive colour palette, helping to create distinctive facades without compromise. Boards are available in both smooth and textured finishes and can be installed horizontally or vertically, providing even greater creative freedom.

Reliable Stock Availability

Product availability has become a growing concern throughout the construction industry. Delays in material supply can quickly affect project schedules, labour planning and overall profitability.

With manufacturing facilities in nearby Europe, supported by a strong UK distribution network, Cedral is well positioned to maintain consistent product availability across the UK and Ireland.



This gives installers greater confidence when specifying products, improved continuity of supply and reduced risk of costly delays. The same applies to fixings and accessories, which are also supported through Cedral's merchant and distributor network.

Built to Last

Durability remains one of the key considerations when selecting an external cladding solution, particularly for projects where long-term maintenance is a concern.

Cedral facades are renowned for their quality and robustness. Backing that quality is a comprehensive 10-year product guarantee when installed in accordance with manufacturer guidelines, alongside a minimum life expectancy of 50 years. This provides reassurance for both contractors and end clients.

UK-based Technical Support

One of Cedral's strongest differentiators is the level of technical support available. Cedral provides access to a dedicated UK-based technical helpdesk staffed by fully qualified experts. Whether it's installation guidance, specification support or assistance with technical queries on-site, Cedral's specialist team is on-hand to help projects run smoothly.

That level of accessible expertise can be invaluable when working to tight deadlines or navigating increasingly complex building regulations.

Compliance without Compromise

Building safety remains one of the most important considerations in modern construction, particularly in facade specification.

Cedral planks are designed and tested to meet the latest European safety standards and regulations. The products achieve an A2 fire rating, demonstrating excellent fire performance and helping contractors meet stringent compliance requirements.

From design flexibility and dependable availability to quality, technical support and strong safety credentials, Cedral offers contractors a complete facade solution for modern construction projects.

For more information, call 01283 501555 or visit www.cedral.world/en-GB.

Restoring a Heritage Landmark

Mastic Asphalt Council (MAC)

Mastic asphalt waterproofing has played a vital role in the refurbishment of The Colonnade, a Grade II listed landmark on the seafront at Bexhill-on-Sea in East Sussex.

Mastic Asphalt Council (MAC) member Infallible Systems renewed the building's roof waterproofing on behalf of client DBR (London) Limited, a major conservation contractor and Royal Warrant holder, as part of a project to protect the historic structure for future generations.

Built in 1911 to commemorate the coronation of King George V, The Colonnade is a distinctive feature of Bexhill-on-Sea's promenade, contributing to the Edwardian character of the area and the town's identity, but decades of exposure to the elements had taken their toll.

Led by Rother District Council, with DBR Southern as main contractor, the refurbishment addressed long-standing water ingress and structural deterioration, while restoring the building's appearance and improving its resilience to the challenging coastal environment.

Careful Approach

The project commenced in October 2025, with the building undergoing extensive refurbishment and repair before reopening over the Easter period in April 2026.

As a Grade II listed building, The Colonnade required a carefully managed approach to the repair works. Infallible Systems stripped and renewed approximately 500m² of existing roof covering over the concrete slab. The existing mastic asphalt system needed to be removed and the slab was inspected before the new waterproofing system was installed in accordance with the project specification.

The replacement system comprised a BBA-certified, polymer-modified mastic asphalt waterproofing solution from MAC manufacturer member IKO, incorporating British sheathing felt and paving-grade mastic asphalt.

The installation consisted of a 20mm-thick waterproofing layer laid over sheathing felt, followed by a further 20mm of paving-grade mastic asphalt, finished with a sand-rubbed surface. At the upstands, 13mm-thick mastic asphalt was dressed into the primed walls, incorporating a base fillet to provide a continuous waterproofing detail.



These details were particularly important in ensuring that the renewed roof would provide reliable protection against water ingress, helping to safeguard the building fabric from the damaging effects of moisture.

All work was completed in accordance with the specified system requirements, with the heritage status of the building demanding close attention to the existing construction and the quality of the finished installation. Following a final inspection by IKO, a 20-year product and workmanship guarantee was provided.

Suitability for Heritage Projects

The refurbishment of The Colonnade highlights why mastic asphalt continues to be specified for conserving historic buildings. They often require waterproofing solutions that combine proven performance with the ability to accommodate ||-

Built in 1911 to commemorate the coronation of King George V, The Colonnade is a distinctive feature of Bexhill-on-Sea's promenade, contributing to the Edwardian character of the area.





traditional construction details. The long service life of mastic asphalt makes it a valuable option where building owners want to protect historic structures while minimising the need for future intervention.

Mastic asphalt is a highly durable, seamless waterproofing material that can be formed around upstands, junctions and other intricate details. This adaptability is particularly useful on older buildings, where construction features and interfaces can present challenges for modern waterproofing systems.

Its track record is also well established. Mastic asphalt was first laid on the Stone Gallery of St Paul's Cathedral in London in 1906, providing more than a century of weatherproof protection before refurbishment became necessary. Buckingham Palace, meanwhile, has a mastic asphalt roof that has kept the building dry for well over 80 years. Other notable heritage applications include the Tower of London, Tower Bridge and Edinburgh Castle.

The material is also applied by skilled, time--served specialists. Mastic asphalt remains one of the construction industry's traditional craft trades, requiring experience and precision to ensure it is heated to the correct temperature and applied to achieve the required thickness, finish and performance.

As a thermoplastic material, it is applied in a molten state before cooling to form a hard, durable and waterproof surface. Unlike many other roofing membranes, its installation does not require a naked flame at the point of application - an important distinction when considering the protection of existing buildings and their surroundings.

Sustainability is another consideration. Mastic asphalt can be recycled or reused as a roof screed at the end of its service life, while its longevity can help reduce the frequency of replacement works.

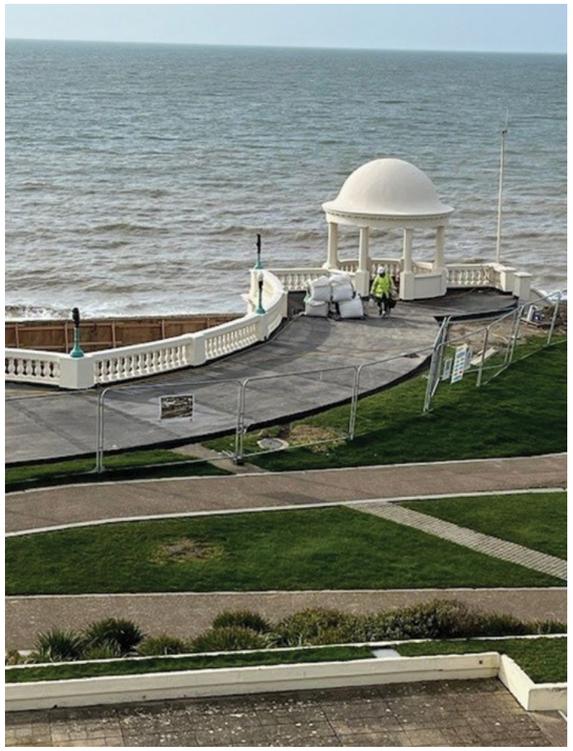
Protecting a Landmark for the Future

The roof refurbishment formed part of a wider programme to renew The Colonnade, including repairs to its white façades, teal-accented windows and timber elements, alongside new doors and bench seating.



The completed refurbishment has restored the appearance of this prominent seafront building while addressing the underlying deterioration that threatened its long-term condition. With the building now renovated, the project has brought renewed activity to the promenade. Several new businesses have opened at The Colonnade, such as independent cafes, seafront kiosks and ice cream parlours. A major restaurant operator also plans to open in time for the spring and summer season in 2027.

The long service life of mastic asphalt makes it a valuable option where building owners want to protect historic structures while minimising the need for future intervention.



For Infallible Systems, the project demonstrates the important contribution specialist mastic asphalt contractors make to the conservation of the built environment. By combining traditional application skills with a modern, certified waterproofing system, the company has helped protect a significant local landmark against the elements for generations to come.

The Mastic Asphalt Council (MAC) is the trade association for the mastic asphalt industry in the UK. Representing more than 90 companies operating in the sector, MAC members include mastic asphalt manufacturers, specialist application contractors and associated suppliers of equipment and services.

Domestic Flat Roof System Featuring RubberBond™ FleeceBack EPDM

Project:	Oakland Avenue Flat Roofs
Location:	Droitwich, WR9 7DD
Roofing Specialist Contractor:	Bai Construction, Worcester
Product used:	RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM Roofing System
Supplier/Contact:	Flex-R – Ethan Brooks
Roof size:	80m²
Completion Date:	October 2025

Overview

This domestic house project involved the re-roofing of existing flat roofs completed in the 1980s and 1990s, which were now leaking and insufficiently insulated to current standards. The client required a flat-roof solution that would provide long-term weather protection and energy efficiency.

Bai Construction was approached and proposed RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM over a new warm roof. The Flex-R product was selected as the preferred waterproofing system based on its durability, based on its established track record in UK installations over more than 25 years, supported by manufacturer testing and third-party certification. The system holds BBA Certificate 22/6056, which states that, under normal service conditions, the product is expected to provide a durable waterproof covering with a service life in excess of 35 years.

Installation

Bai Construction installed the full warm-roof build-up, which comprised:

- Stripping back the existing Asphalt roof covering and roof deck.
- Installing a new Oriented Strand Board (OSB) timber deck including new timber firrings
- An Air and Vapour Control Layer (AVCL)
- 150mm PIR Insulation
- RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM waterproofing
- Replacement UPVC fascia & Soffits plus rainwater goods i.e. gutters and downpipes

All RubberBond products were supplied by Flex-R.

RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM incorporates a Factory Applied Seam Tape, which improves seaming efficiency and helps deliver consistent seam quality. This enabled a faster installation and a consistent watertight finish.





On successful completion, the project qualified for a 20-year product warranty, in accordance with Flex-R's current warranty terms and conditions.

The overall project duration was approximately two weeks; the RubberBond element took five days to complete.

Product and System Benefits

RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM is a fleece-reinforced single-ply membrane designed for use on flat and low-slope roofs. Key features include:

- Enhanced durability: The fleece-reinforced backing is designed to improve resistance to puncture during installation and in service.
- Proven weathering performance: The membrane is formulated for UV stability and flexibility in a range of climatic conditions.
- Fully adhered system: The bonding method provides continuous adhesion across the roof surface, contributing to reliable waterproofing performance.
- Thermal compatibility: Suitable for use with various insulation types to support overall building energy performance.
- Controlled supply and training: RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM can only installed by Flex-R Specialist Registered Installers (SRIs) who have received product-specific training.

All claims regarding performance are based on manufacturer testing, published product data, and the installer's practical experience.

Project Outcome

The resulting roof was an aesthetic improvement on the old asphalt roof. It provides a smooth finish, improved thermal performance compared with the previous roof build-up over the rooms beneath, and increased strength and resistance to puncturing.

Key Project Details

- 80m² flat roof installation using RubberBond FleeceBack EPDM Roofing System
- Installed by a Flex-R Specialist Registered Installer
- 20-year product warranty available through Flex-R (subject to terms and conditions)
- Demonstrates coordinated design across all flat roofs on the property

Consumer Protection: the Mark of a Quality Roofing Job



As the NFRC recently warned of the rise in roofing scams, professional roofing companies need to be more aware than ever of proving their credentials and ensuring their consumer contracts stand up. Here, Charlotte Carter, Chief Operating Officer at TrustMark explains the obligations and benefits of a professional approach.

When a homeowner is having a roof installed, or replaced or repaired, they are making one of the biggest financial decisions they can take on their property. Yet compared with other major purchases, such as a car, a holiday or a financial product, the consumer protection available for home improvements is often much less visible and far less well understood.

Consumer protection in home improvements isn't just a single guarantee. It is a system that runs from first enquiry through to completion and aftercare. Done well, it can provide homeowners with three assurances: that the work is right first time, that the process is easy to navigate, and that if something does go wrong, it is resolved quickly and fairly. For roofers, that same system provides a consistent framework that underpins professionalism and helps good businesses stand apart from the rest.

Confidence

Good protection begins at the very first conversation. Homeowners want clarity on what work will be carried out, what standards apply, and what safeguards are in place if things don't go to plan. Clear contracts, defined scopes of work and transparent communication throughout a project set expectations and reduce the risk of disputes later. In a competitive market, roofers who communicate this clearly, and can point to robust protection behind it, stand out.

More Demand, More Risk

Work around the roof and loft areas sits at the heart of the drive to make homes warmer and more energy efficient. The Government's Warm Homes Plan is expected to boost retrofit work across existing homes, from roof and loft insulation to solar panels, while the Future Homes Standard will raise the bar on energy performance in new homes. Both point to more work, and more complex work, for roofing contractors in the years ahead.

More demand creates opportunity, but also risk. A fast-growing market attracts businesses that cut corners as well as those that do things properly. Our own research found that 20% of homeowners reported serious problems with roofing and guttering, and 42% with low-carbon projects such as heat pumps and solar panels. Getting consumer protection right now is how the sector makes sure growth builds trust rather than eroding it.

Payment Problems

For roofing in particular, money is often where the greatest anxiety sits. Homeowners are asked to pay significant sums up front, sometimes before materials are ordered or the scaffolding goes up, with no certainty over what happens if the job runs into trouble. Roofers face a mirror image of that risk: delivering quality work and then chasing payment or being asked to start without any protection of their own. Weather delays only add to the strain on both sides.

This is why TrustMark has partnered with Trusted Payments, helping Registered Businesses and their customers to agree scope

TrustMark has partnered with Trusted Payments, helping ... to track milestones through the life of a project. Payments are protected, so homeowners know their money is secure until they are satisfied with the work, and roofers know they will be paid fairly and on time.





The Future Homes Standard is here — and with the growing requirement for in-roof solar PV, installing the right ventilation strategy is essential. Get this wrong, and roof space condensation becomes a real risk.

Glidevale Protect offers one of the widest ranges of pitched roofing underlays and ventilation products in the UK and Ireland, with a 15 year product warranty* for complete reassurance on solar applications.

For ventilation guidance to help comply with BS 5250, talk to us and get your roof specification right first time.

Visit **www.glidevaleprotect.com/roofing**

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Talk to us about your ventilation strategy: simply call us on **+44 (0)161 905 5700**, or email us at **info@glidevaleprotect.com**

glidevale protect



and pricing, and to track milestones through the life of a project. Payments are protected, so homeowners know their money is secure until they are satisfied with the work, and roofers know they will be paid fairly and on time. Features include automatic contracts, project payment plans, and automatic invoice chasing, plus access to the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman for unresolved issues, including non-payment, snagging and the handover process.

Whole System

Those early foundations are only the start. Protection continues through visible safeguards: TrustMark Registered Businesses provide insurance against ceasing trading and a minimum two-year guarantee on products and workmanship. Protection should be seen and felt as a sign of quality, not treated as small print a homeowner has to go looking for.

And none of it works if it is complicated. Homeowners need straightforward information about contracts, guarantees and responsibilities, and a simple route to redress if needed. On a roofing job involving scaffolders, suppliers and changeable weather, that clarity turns a daunting purchase into one a homeowner can approach with confidence.

What Homeowners Want

Our recent research, *Consumer Protection in home improvements: Building a consumer-centric approach*, surveyed 1,500 people. It found that nearly three-quarters (74%) don't know about the protections that should be in place for home improvements. Two-thirds of homeowners didn't receive a contract before work started, nearly a quarter of those having work done experienced a serious problem, and 73% said they wouldn't know where to go for redress.

Homeowners also know what would help. Most (87%) want one place to go for accurate, trustworthy information, and 78% want a single quality standard for all tradespeople. Put simply, they want simplification, clarity and surety when they invest in their home.

Those findings are shaping our next steps. We launched a public consultation on changes to our quality scheme on 23 September, proposing a simpler redress pathway, with TrustMark as the single point of contact for consumer complaints. It also covers stronger oversight and accountability, improved assurance and enhanced financial protections.

Protecting Roofers

Consumer protection is just as valuable for reputable roofing businesses as it is for homeowners. It creates a level playing field, so quality contractors aren't undercut by poor practice, and it reduces disputes by agreeing expectations from the outset. Where issues do arise, a structured, fair process protects a roofer's reputation as much as the homeowner's property.

Ultimately, the best form of consumer protection is getting the job right the first time. Everything else, from clear contracts to secure payments, exists to support that outcome, and to give homeowners and roofers alike the confidence to see a project through from first enquiry to final sign-off. ■

TrustMark is the only UK Government Endorsed Quality Scheme for home improvements. It is a not-for-profit organisation and invests any surplus back into the scheme. See https://www.trustmark.org.uk/homeowner/support/consumer-protection.

None of it works if it is complicated. Homeowners need straightforward information about contracts, guarantees and responsibilities, and a simple route to redress if needed.



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WE CAN DELIVER YOUR LOAD WITHIN 2 DAYS!
ONE CALL ONE LOAD NEXT DAY
That's right - you're full order delivered in one load within 2 days of ordering.
Your complete order will be delivered in one load within 1 to 2 days of placing it. We understand that time is money in the roofing industry. That's why we maintain large stocks, ready for immediate delivery. This ensures you receive the tiles you need when you need them, without the inconvenience of split deliveries or long waits. Including full range of fittings and roofing accessories.
WE GUARANTEE A QUOTE WITHIN 48 HOURS
15 YEAR FULL ROOF GUARANTEE
DUO THIN FLAT Shown in Brown
DOUBLE ROMAN Shown in Rustic Red
SQUARE TOP Shown in Brown
THIN FLAT Shown in Rustic Red
ROUND TOP Shown in Anthracite
MINI-SLATE Shown in Grey
CENTURION Shown in Brown
SL8 Shown in Slate Grey
GEMINI Shown in Red
V2 Shown in Autumn
easy-trim Roofing and Construction Products
roofing@fpmccann.co.uk | Cadeby Depot: 01455 290 780 | fpmccann.co.uk/uk/concrete-roof-tiles
easytrimsales@fpmccann.co.uk | Altham Depot: 01282 930 680 | easy-trim.co.uk

Low Pitch Roofing: A Growing Opportunity for UK Roofers

From any angle, low pitch roofing presents a strong business opportunity for UK roofers over the next decade. According to a report from Reliable Business Insights, the global low-slope roofing market is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of around 5% between 2026 and 2033. Growth is being driven by increasing construction activity and demand for durable, cost-effective and energy-efficient roofing solutions.



For UK roofers, this creates opportunities across new-build and renovation projects as homeowners, architects and contractors seek modern alternatives to traditional roofing materials.

Expanding Opportunities

One area gaining particular attention is lightweight composite roofing. Modern composite materials can replicate the appearance of traditional roofing products while offering practical advantages for low pitch applications and refurbishment projects.

Depending on the manufacturer's specification, certain composite roofing products are suitable for lower roof pitches. They can recreate the appearance of natural slate, shake and other traditional materials while being significantly lighter, making them attractive for conservatories, extensions and renovations where structural loading is a concern.

Their lightweight construction can also simplify handling and installation, helping contractors work efficiently and potentially reducing labour requirements and project timescales. For refurbishment projects, a lightweight system may allow an existing structure to be retained rather than requiring extensive alterations to accommodate heavier materials, subject to appropriate structural assessment and specification.

Performance without Compromise

Low pitch roofs demand careful material selection. The covering must be suitable for the specific pitch, provide effective weather protection and work with the underlying structure. Correct installation and attention to detailing are equally important.

Modern composite roofing systems are engineered to deliver reliable performance in challenging weather conditions, including resistance to wind uplift and driving rain. Advances in manufacturing technology also allow products to reproduce the texture, colour variation and character of traditional roofing materials with impressive realism.

This combination of performance, lightweight construction and aesthetics is helping composite roofing become an increasingly attractive option for lower-pitched applications, giving contractors greater flexibility when traditional materials are unsuitable.

Industry Insight

Daniel Whelan, General Manager and Technical Advisor at Insullite Ltd [www.insullite.co.uk] has extensive experience with tiled conservatory roof systems, replacement roofs and prefabricated building solutions.

Through the company's Roof2Room conservatory replacement business, his team regularly encounters projects where natural slate is unsuitable because of roof pitch or structural loading.

Daniel explains that composite roofing systems offer greater flexibility than traditional slate, allowing his team to achieve a premium appearance while meeting the technical requirements of individual projects.

He also reports consistently positive customer feedback, with many homeowners appreciating the authentic appearance of composite products and being surprised by how closely they replicate natural slate.

This highlights an important opportunity for contractors: when traditional materials are unsuitable, customers may not have to compromise on the appearance they want. Understanding the alternatives available allows roofers to offer more informed recommendations and solutions tailored to each property.

A Growing Opportunity

Low pitch roofing is about more than choosing an attractive covering. Products must meet the technical requirements of the roof, provide reliable weather protection and be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

The development of lightweight composite roofing materials gives contractors greater choice when traditional materials are restricted by weight, pitch or installation considerations. Easier handling, efficient installation and greater design flexibility can all help roofing businesses approach refurbishment and replacement projects with confidence.

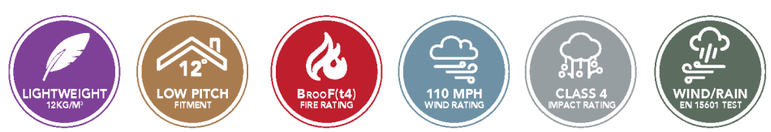
For homeowners, these systems offer the opportunity to achieve a traditional, high-quality appearance without necessarily accepting the limitations associated with heavier roofing materials.

Products such as TapcoSlate and DaVinci Select Shake demonstrate how modern composite roofing can combine the aesthetic appeal of traditional materials with the practical advantages of lightweight construction, making them increasingly relevant to the growing low pitch roofing market.

As demand for adaptable roofing solutions develops, contractors who understand the benefits and technical requirements of low pitch systems will be well placed to identify new opportunities, advise customers confidently and make the most of this evolving sector.



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The Hidden Risk of Roof Tile Cutting



Cutting a roof tile is an everyday task for roofers. But many workers don't even realise how this seemingly routine task can expose them to serious long-term health consequences. Here, Damien Pooley, Portfolio Manager - Pitched Roofing at BMI UK & Ireland, explains why awareness and training around dust management are so important.



Some roofers may believe that a small amount of dust is simply an unavoidable part of the job. But repeated exposure, even in small quantities, can have serious consequences. Respirable crystalline silica (RCS) dust, a by-product of cutting materials such as clay and concrete roof tiles, can cause irreversible health problems, including silicosis, COPD and lung cancer.

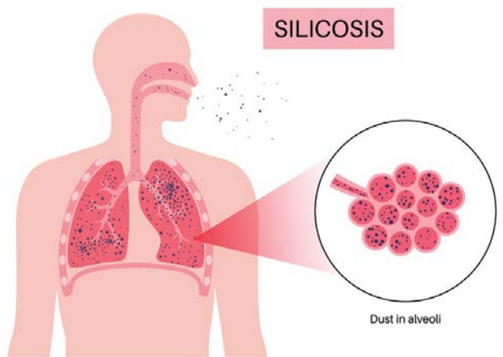
The Danger of Dust

Despite the serious risks of RCS dust, exposure to it remains easy to overlook on busy roofing sites. The dust created when cutting roof tiles isn't always visible. Microscopic particles can remain airborne and travel beyond the immediate cutting area, where they are small enough to be breathed deeply into the lungs.

Unlike a more visible physical injury, the damage caused by repeated exposure may not be immediately obvious. This can make it easier for workers to underestimate the risk and allow unsafe cutting practices to become part of their everyday routine.

However, repeated exposure to harmful RCS dust is so dangerous because its effects can build up gradually, often without the individual realising that anything is wrong.

By the time symptoms develop, such as breathlessness or a persistent cough, significant lung damage may have already occurred. In the most serious cases, lung diseases like silicosis can cause permanent disability. Yet controlling dust exposure can significantly reduce the risk of long-term harm. The National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) suggest an 'assess, control and review' model to help eliminate dust at the source.



Despite the serious risks of RCS dust, exposure to it remains easy to overlook on busy roofing sites. The dust created when cutting roof tiles isn't always visible.

Cut the Dust

Recognising the risk is the first step; the next, to make safer practices routine, requires effective training. It is easy for familiar tasks to become unquestioned, particularly when the immediate consequences aren't obvious. Cutting a tile only takes a matter of moments, and the dust produced may quickly disappear, but the absence of an immediate consequence does not mean there is no risk. If roofers better understand what RCS dust is through training, where it comes from and the potential consequences of exposure, they are better placed to recognise when they may be at risk and take the necessary precautions.

The NFRC's recent Cut the Dust [https://www.nfrc.co.uk/knowledge/campaigns/cut-the-dust.html] campaign, supported by BMI, calls on the industry to train teams and challenge unsafe practices, alongside controlling every cut, using appropriate dust suppression and wearing suitable respiratory protective equipment where required. This means challenging the idea that dust is simply an unavoidable part of roofing. It also means making sure that everyone on site understands the risks, knows how to work safely and feels able to challenge practices that could expose themselves or others unnecessarily.

Awareness should not be limited to new starters. Refresher training can help keep dust management front of mind and ensure that safe practices don't become diluted over time.

Controls only work when they're implemented consistently. Checking equipment, maintaining water suppression systems, and ensuring workers understand the risks help reduce exposure over time.

On-site Precautions

Planning projects as accurately as possible can significantly reduce unnecessary tile cutting and exposure to harmful by-products such as RCS. The safest cut is arguably the one that doesn't happen on site. Where project requirements allow, cutting or preparing materials in a controlled off-site environment can help limit the number of people exposed to silica dust and make it easier to put effective controls in place.

Where cutting on site is unavoidable, using hand tools rather than high-energy power equipment helps to reduce the amount of airborne dust. If power cutting is necessary, using a cut-off saw with a water suppression attachment can prevent large amounts of dust from becoming airborne. However, water doesn't remove risk entirely, so further controls may be needed.

Where cutting must take place on site, a designated cutting area can help limit exposure. Limiting cutting to one area reduces the number of people exposed to dust and helps control particles from spreading. In these areas, wearing the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is essential. Suitable respiratory protective equipment, such as an FFP3 mask or half-mask with a P3 filter, provides an additional layer of protection when cutting silica-containing roof tiles. The PPE must fit properly and requires face-fit testing.

The NFRC also calls for the industry to eliminate dry sweeping and blowing entirely. Sweeping without dampening the area first causes more dust to become airborne where it can be inhaled more easily. Instead, dust should be removed using appropriate industrial vacuum equipment or by using water.

Making Dust Control Routine

Controls only work when they're implemented consistently. Checking equipment, maintaining water suppression systems, and ensuring workers understand the risks help reduce exposure over time.

Roofers can also seek advice from tile manufacturers on managing dust safely. However, guidance is only effective when workers know where to find it, understand why it matters and apply it in practice.

The industry therefore has a role to play in keeping the conversation around silica dust going, sharing practical advice and making sure the risks remain visible even when the dust itself isn't. Campaigns such as the NFRC's Cut the Dust initiative help reinforce this message, encouraging the industry to look beyond familiar working habits and take a more consistent approach to controlling exposure.

No single measure can address the risk on its own. Reducing exposure requires a combination of good planning, appropriate tools, effective control measures, suitable protective equipment and training that empowers workers to challenge unsafe practices.

The goal is to ensure that the invisible hazard of silica dust never becomes an overlooked one. By making the awareness and control of dust part of everyday roofing practice, the industry can help ensure that protecting workers becomes as routine as the tasks they carry out. ■

To find out more about BMI's customer support, visit: https://www.bmigroup.com/uk/support/pitched-roofing-services/?utm_source=PR&utm_medium=TL&utm_campaign=Cut+the+dust+RT



Futureproof Flashing with Leadax Lead Replacements

The construction sector is undergoing a major transition and the demands placed on construction products are changing rapidly. Clients expect more from their performance, sustainability and circularity, while developments in legislation and regulation are prompting the industry to reassess materials and their applications.

Traditional materials and solutions therefore do not always meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Innovation and new materials are needed to keep pace with these changing demands. A recent example is the Health and Safety Executive's consultation on proposals to revise blood lead exposure levels under the Control of Lead at Work Regulations. This highlights the importance of health and safety in the selection of construction materials. Leadax Original offers a practical alternative for Code 5 applications, with quality and performance supported by a BBA Certificate.

Safer Working Starts with Better Material Choices

Technical performance is only part of materials' assessment. Circularity, environmental impact, health, safety and the practical demands of installation are also becoming increasingly important in material selection.

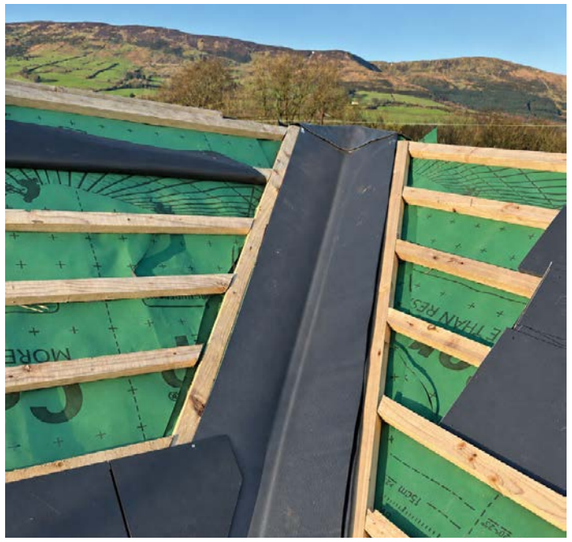
In a sector built on established practices, familiar materials can be difficult to challenge. Lead sheet is a clear example. HSE's consultation brings the health implications of working with lead sheet back into focus, yet discussions on site still often concentrate on how much lead workers are exposed to. This narrow focus risks overlooking a more fundamental question: "Why should a worker face the risk of exposure to lead at all, when proven alternatives are already available for many applications?"

CLAW Puts Prevention First

In Great Britain, the Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002 require employers first to assess whether exposure to lead can be prevented. In meeting that duty, substitution takes priority wherever reasonably practicable, using a material or process that eliminates or reduces the health risk under the conditions of use. Where prevention is not reasonably practicable, exposure must be adequately controlled.

HSE's guidance for the construction sector reflects this approach by explicitly identifying the use of different materials as a way to prevent or reduce exposure. This places material selection at the beginning of the discussion. Before deciding how to control





The discussion should ... begin with whether exposure to lead is necessary in applications for which proven, suitable alternatives are available.

exposure during a task, employers should consider whether the task or material can be changed to prevent that exposure. Minimising risks starts with addressing the source before relying on gloves or additional work instructions.

The discussion should therefore begin with whether exposure to lead is necessary in applications for which proven, suitable alternatives are available.

Leadax lead replacements were developed with precisely this thinking in mind. They offer an alternative to traditional lead sheet across a range of applications while retaining the functionality required of the material. Substitution is therefore both part of the approach to meeting legal duties, wherever reasonably practicable, and an opportunity to reconsider the materials used on site. The assessment must also account for any risks introduced by the alternative and its installation.

Leadax Original offers a Practical Alternative

Leadax Original is a clear example of how material innovation can offer a practical alternative to lead. Developed more than 10 years ago as an alternative to traditional lead sheet, it provides a high-quality solution for Code 5 lead applications. It combines flexibility, straightforward installation and an appearance similar to traditional lead sheet with lightweight, lead-free handling. Its Environmental Product Declaration documents the material's environmental performance, achieving the lowest environmental impact score compared to other flashing materials. With an established track record in practical use and BBA-certified quality and performance, Leadax Original gives contractors, installers and roofers confidence in choosing an alternative. Global players such as Sika and IKO Distribution have committed to distributing Leadax in the UK market.

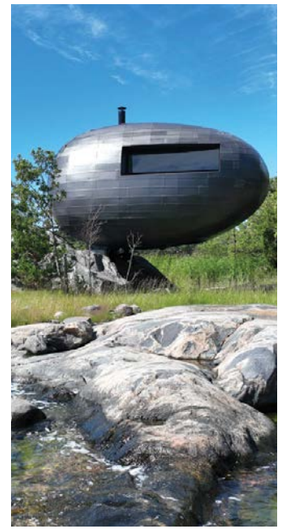
Materials for Tomorrow's Roofing Industry

A circular economy is about more than keeping materials in use. It is also about considering which materials we choose to keep in circulation. Lead sheet, for example, can be recycled repeatedly, but recycling does not eliminate its toxic properties. Each new life cycle keeps a hazardous heavy metal in circulation, with continued potential for exposure and release into the environment.

Keeping experienced roofers healthy and able to remain in the trade makes ergonomics an important part of material selection. Lighter products that are easier to handle and install can help reduce physical strain and support more efficient working on site.

Roofing materials should therefore be assessed on technical performance and environmental impact alongside circularity, health, safety and the demands placed on installers. Leadax lead replacements put this broader approach into practice. Every specification influences both the finished roof and the working conditions of the people installing it. This raises a practical question for contractors and specifiers: which materials suit the way we want to build today and tomorrow? ■

More info: www.leadax.com/uk/



Why I Believe There Is Now a Genuine Alternative to Lead



by Stuart Penrose, leading domestic and heritage award-winning roofing specialist.

I have spent more than four decades working in roofing, much of that time restoring traditional and historic properties. I have always believed that traditional craftsmanship should be preserved, but that doesn't mean we should resist better materials when they become available.

For more than 15 years, I have questioned why our industry continues to rely so heavily on lead. We have progressively removed lead from paints, petrol and many other everyday applications because of its environmental and health implications, yet it remains widely used in roofing.

My concerns weren't simply environmental. Over the years, I have encountered failed lead valleys, poorly executed flashings and unsightly staining to otherwise beautiful buildings. I began looking seriously at alternatives.

Copper and zinc have always been excellent materials, and I continue to use both. However, they require specialist skills and fabrication, particularly around complicated roof details. I also experimented with several manufactured lead alternatives, but none convinced me that they offered the appearance, workability and long-term confidence I expected.

That changed when I began using Leadax more than three years ago.



What impressed me wasn't a manufacturer's sales pitch. It was how the material actually performed in my hands and on the roofs we were restoring.

Leadax has the appearance and flexibility of traditional lead, but is considerably lighter. It can be dressed into complicated details, supplied in continuous lengths of up to six metres, reducing the number of joints, and installed without the hot works associated with lead welding.

For my business, these are significant practical advantages. My apprentices can develop their skills working with a modern material while maintaining the craftsmanship our customers expect.

Of course, no material compensates for poor workmanship. Correct preparation, detailing and installation remain essential, regardless of the product.

I also recognise that some heritage projects require traditional materials to satisfy conservation specifications. That is entirely understandable.

But where we have a choice, I believe we should be prepared to question established practices.

After more than three years of installing Leadax on customers' properties, I have developed genuine confidence in what it offers.

I have never been someone who endorses products lightly. My reputation has taken decades to establish, and I wouldn't put it behind a material I didn't believe in.

For me, Leadax is no longer simply another alternative on the market. It is a genuine, practical alternative to lead.

North Routunda Restoration Balances Heritage and Performance on Glasgow Waterfront

Originally built in 1890 as part of the hydraulic lift infrastructure serving the Clyde Tunnel, the North Rotunda has been transformed into a premium entertainment and events venue following a comprehensive restoration of its distinctive domed roof structure.

Restoring a historic roof in an exposed waterfront location demands more than an authentic finish. While materials and detailing must respect the building's original character, it is also essential to provide the durability and weather protection needed to withstand driving rain, high winds and repeated freeze-thaw cycles. At Glasgow's Category B listed North Rotunda, these competing demands shaped a technically complex restoration that has brought one of the city's most recognisable waterfront landmarks into a new era of use.

As part of a £15 million conversion by Forrest Group, natural slate was specified to complete the restoration of the landmark's distinctive domed roof, marrying Victorian heritage with modern building performance.

Working alongside ICA Architects and CUPA PIZARRAS, John Fulton Plumbing & Roofing specified Heavy 3 natural slate, a choice endorsed by Historic Environment Scotland as suitable for listed building applications. The specification needed to deliver the traditional Scottish slate character appropriate to the building while meeting the practical demands of its prominent position on the River Clyde.

At 7.5mm thick, with a naturally riven surface texture, Heavy 3 provides the traditional appearance required for the restoration alongside the durability needed for Scotland's maritime climate. With a documented service life exceeding a century and full BS EN 12326 compliance, the slate offers a long-term roofing solution suited to the demands of a sensitive heritage project.

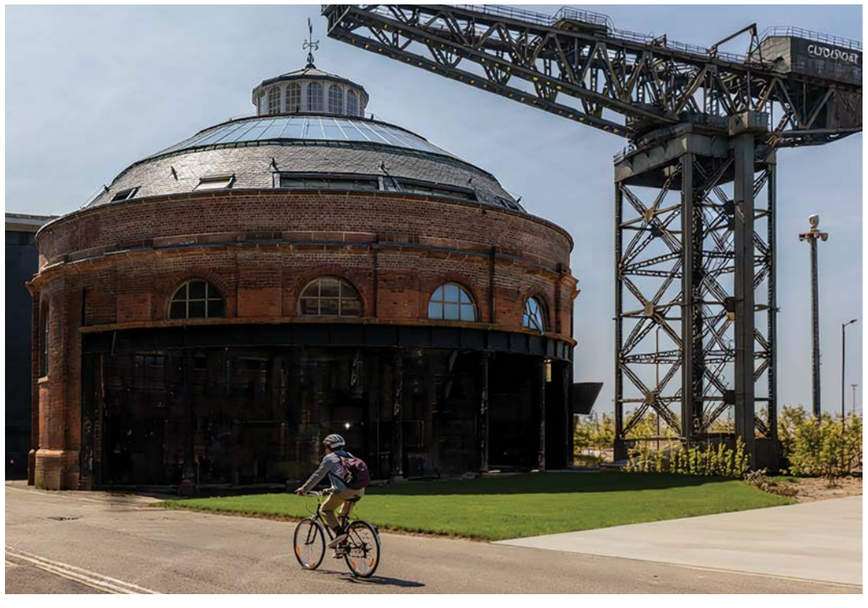
Originally built in 1890 as part of the hydraulic lift infrastructure serving the Clyde Tunnel, the North Rotunda has been transformed into a premium entertainment and events venue following a comprehensive restoration of its distinctive domed roof structure. Its circular form and prominent riverside position make it one of Glasgow's most recognisable landmarks, now accommodating up to 500 guests beneath its soaring 10m high cupola.

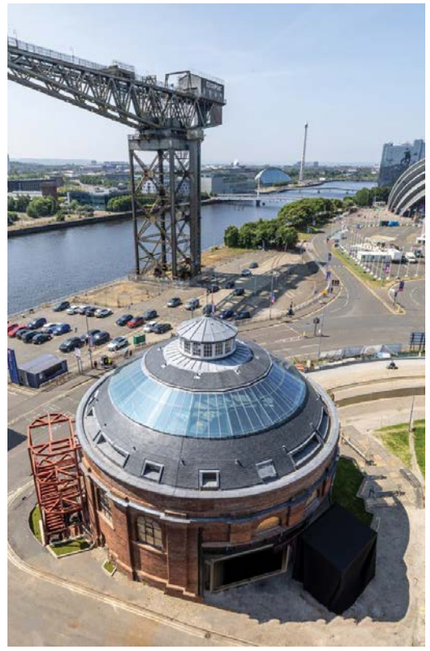
Working with Complex Geometry

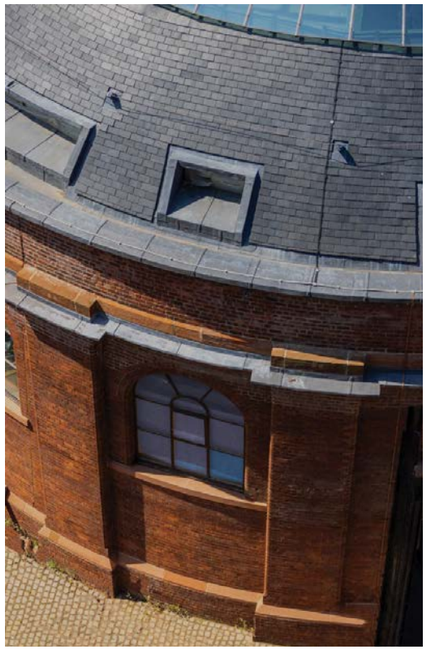
Few roofing projects demand the geometric precision required by a circular domed structure. Standard rectangular slates cannot follow a curved surface without creating gaps or misaligned tails, making the setting out and shaping of each slate critical to achieving a consistent finish. On the North Rotunda roof, each slate required hand-shaping, or 'shouldering', of the top corners to create tapered profiles and accommodate the changing curvature. A reduced 32 x 22cm format was specified to achieve tighter radius conformity while retaining a visual scale appropriate to the building's prominence.

Planning consent also required the preservation of the historic Victorian framework of steel ribs supporting radiating timber rafters. This presented a further challenge: a completely new ventilated and insulated roof assembly had to be constructed above the retained structure, effectively creating one roof on top of another.

The new build-up comprised 19mm treated sarking boards, Permavent APEX vapour-permeable underlay, Rockwool HardRock Multi-Fix DD insulation at a 60mm specification, and an AirTrack continuous ventilation system with Manthorpe components at window interfaces.







The result was a modern roof assembly integrated with the retained historic framework, allowing the original structure to remain while accommodating the requirements of the restored building.

A Continuous Glazed Rooflight

One of the most striking interventions is a continuous, 360⁰ glazed rooflight band encircling the dome. Introducing natural light into the interior while respecting the building's historic character, the feature required structural modifications to create the opening and millimetre-accurate setting out and weatherproofing around the entire circumference.

The original cupola was beyond salvaging, so a new bespoke timber replacement was fabricated off-site under workshop conditions. Disassembled for transport, it was reassembled on site, glazed, roofed with lead and finish-painted beneath a temporary on-site tent.

Once complete, including reinstatement of the restored weathervane, the entire 6.5-tonne assembly was crane-lifted into its final position.

John Fulton Plumbing & Roofing undertook the hand-formed lead sheet detailing around the cupola base and rooflight band, with copper slate fixings used throughout the slate installation.

The combination of specialist leadwork, traditional slate installation and contemporary glazing required careful coordination to ensure the junctions between the different elements were accurately formed and weatherproofed.

Delivering a Landmark Heritage Project

The North Rotunda restoration highlights the specialist skills required to work on architecturally significant roofs, where the preservation of historic fabric must be balanced against modern performance requirements. It also demonstrates how projects of this nature can help to maintain traditional roofing skills while exposing the next generation to complex techniques rarely encountered outside landmark building work.

Careful planning and coordination were central to completing the project on time and within budget. Drone surveys during the initial site assessment provided detailed roof condition documentation and geometric data, improving safety by reducing the need for preliminary roof access and helping to define the scope before mobilisation.

Access presented another logistical challenge.

One of the most striking interventions is a continuous, 360⁰ glazed rooflight band encircling the dome.

Positioned tightly against the River Clyde, the site offered minimal space for storing materials and equipment. A mechanical hoist enabled controlled lifting of slate batches, lead sheet and other components to working height, helping the roofing team manage materials efficiently within the site's constraints.

In summary, the North Rotunda project demonstrates the value of selecting materials that respond to the particular demands of a building, rather than treating heritage specification as a purely aesthetic exercise. Here, the slate's traditional appearance, durability and suitability for listed building applications supported the architectural intent, while the new roof build-up and carefully detailed interfaces addressed the practical demands of the restored structure.

The completed roof is a testament to the value of combining traditional roofing expertise with considered material selection, modern construction methods and close collaboration between the project team. At the North Rotunda, the result is not simply the restoration of a historic roof, but the adaptation of a distinctive Victorian landmark for continued use, with its architectural character retained and its performance suited to the demands of its exposed waterfront setting. ■

For more information on Heavy 3 natural slate, visit https://www.cupapizarras.com/uk/.

Taking the Heat Off Flat Roofs

The summer of 2026 brought heatwaves, record-breaking temperatures, drought and wildfires. By August, the UK had experienced four heatwaves, while temperatures of 35°C or above were recorded in May, June and July for the first time. Torrential rain and other extreme weather are becoming more frequent. These conditions prompted the National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) to revisit research on climate-resilient roofs commissioned from the University of Southampton.

While building design must adapt, the research shows that the starting point is familiar. It found that "well-insulated roofs that were airtight", combined with ventilation, and medium- or light-coloured roof surfaces, reduced overheating risk. Drainage and effective water-retention systems were also important potential adaptations.



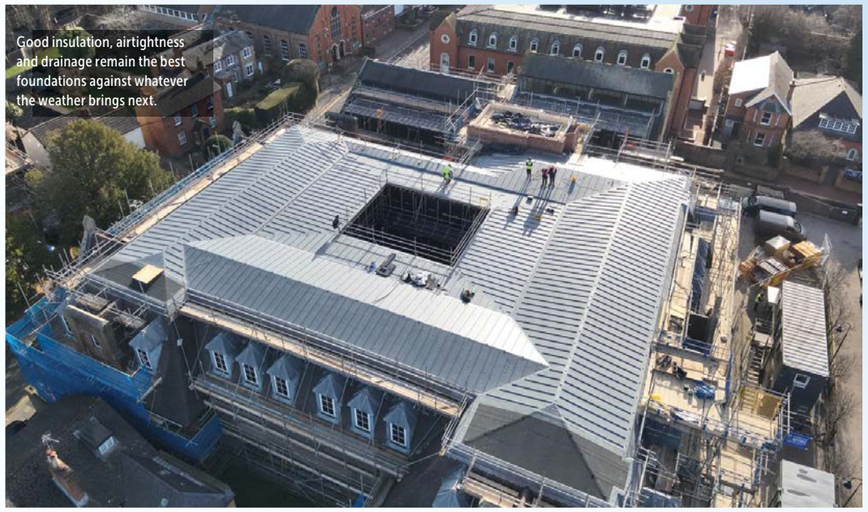
Building design must adapt, but the research shows that the starting point is familiar.

Risks from Above

Flat roofs receive sustained solar exposure and will absorb heat, particularly where dark roof coverings are used. That heat can pass into the building below, increasing overheating and occupier demand for cooling. The NFRC states that winter thermal performance and summer overheating must be considered together.

Intense rainfall presents another challenge. Water cannot leave a flat roof as quickly as a pitched one, so inadequate falls, blocked outlets or undersized drainage can cause ponding. The consequent added load and prolonged exposure can damage waterproofing and overwhelm the drainage system.

Green roofs shade the waterproofing and use vegetation and growing medium to retain rainwater. Blue roofs temporarily store water and release it at a controlled rate, reducing peak pressure on drainage systems.



Good insulation, airtightness and drainage remain the best foundations against whatever the weather brings next.

Start with the Fabric

Insulation limits heat transfer through the roof in both directions, supporting stable internal temperatures. But calculated performance only counts if continuity is achieved on site. Insulation must fit closely, airtightness must be maximised, and junctions and penetrations carefully detailed. Roof refurbishment also provides an opportunity to improve thermal performance and overheating resilience.

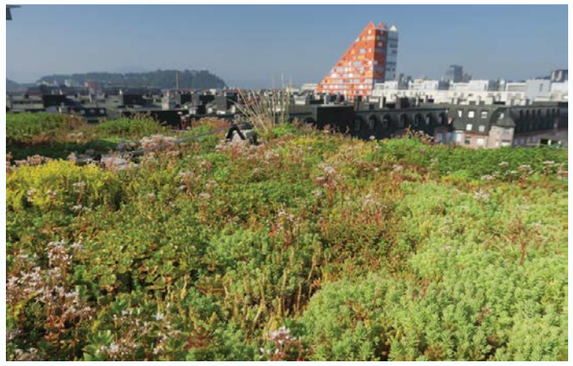
Warm roofs are preferred because the insulation sits above the deck, creating a continuous thermal layer. This limits thermal bridging in both directions, reducing heat loss in winter and heat gains in summer. Keeping the deck warm also makes airtightness and interstitial condensation easier to manage than in a cold roof, where the structure interrupts the insulation. When an existing cold roof is refurbished, it should be converted to a warm roof wherever height, parapet, abutment and cost constraints allow.

Design the Water Out

As extreme rainfall becomes more common, reliable falls will become increasingly important: a flat roof should never be truly flat. It needs a designed gradient that directs water towards outlets without relying on site improvisation. Cut-to-fall insulation integrates that gradient into the thermal layer. Components arrive with a layout plan, reducing on-site cutting and removing the weight, drying time and sequencing associated with screeds. This can make installation quicker and more predictable while reducing ponding risk from inaccurate falls. As the NFRC guidance stresses, drainage capacity, outlet positioning and overflow provision should reflect future rainfall risk, not historic assumptions.

Make Multifunctional Roofs Work Harder

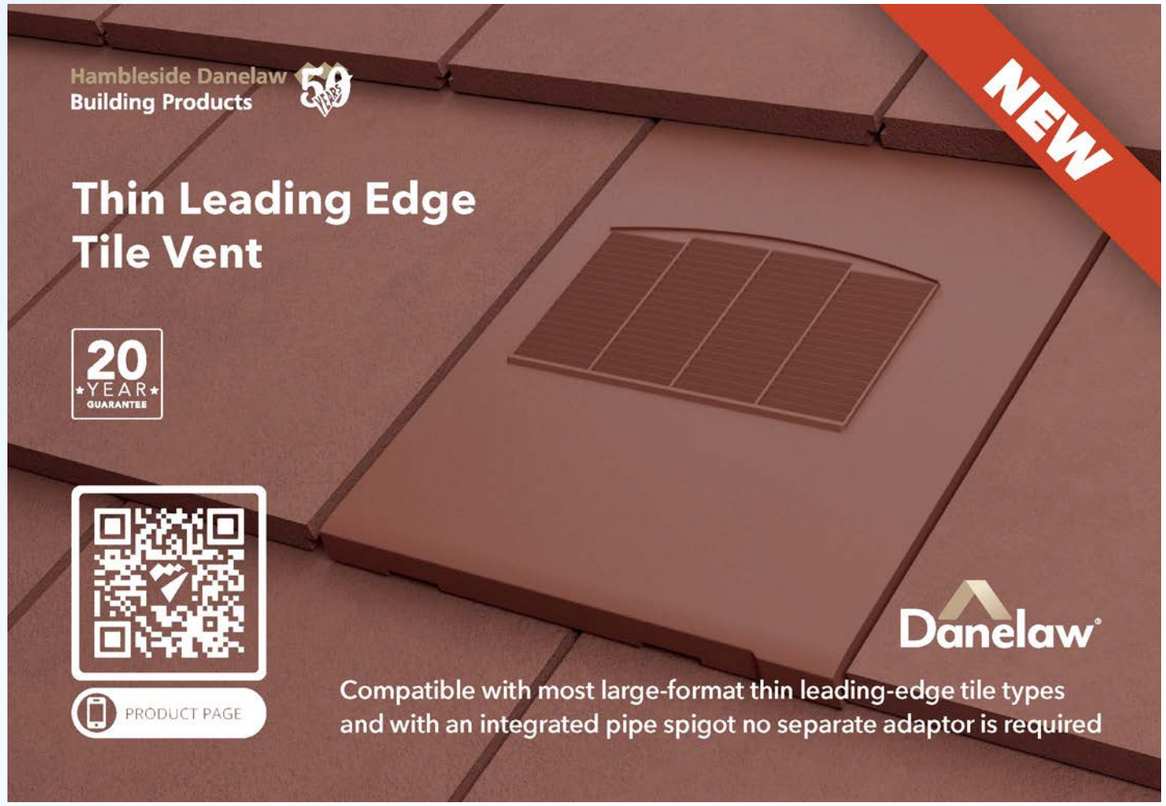
Other measures can improve resilience. Green roofs shade the waterproofing and use vegetation and growing medium to retain rainwater. Blue roofs temporarily store water and release it at a controlled rate, reducing peak pressure on drainage systems. The Southampton research found that light-coloured green and blue roofs produced lower peak-summer heat gains than conventional darker roofs. However, each requires coordinated structural, waterproofing and maintenance strategies. Green and blue roofs, solar PV and combined biosolar systems add permanent loads and require maintenance access. Insulation must have sufficient compressive strength to support the build-up and foot traffic without deforming.



Solar PV also introduces fire risk, so the whole roof system must reflect its intended use. Rock mineral wool is typically non-combustible and Rocksilk® Flat Roof Slab, for example, achieves the best-possible Euroclass A1 reaction to fire classification. Considering how the complete build-up might interact with a solar panel fire helps mitigate the risk.

Whatever the Weather

No single detail will make a flat roof climate-resilient. The answer is to get the fundamentals right, then design every additional function as part of the roof from the start. Good insulation, airtightness and drainage remain the best foundations for roofs, whatever the weather has in store.



Suitable for What? Why a Roofing Membrane Cannot Be Specified in Isolation

The first of a two-part series, Steve Cookson here explains the detailed investigation and information needed before an accurate and meaningful roof specification can be arrived at.

One of the questions I am regularly asked following a roof survey is: "What system should we use?"

It sounds like a straightforward question, but in reality it is often being asked too early.

There are plenty of excellent waterproofing products available in the UK: reinforced bitumen membranes, single-ply systems, liquid-applied membranes, mastic asphalt and others. Most established systems can provide decades of reliable service when they are designed, specified and installed in the right circumstances.

The important words there are *in the right circumstances*. A good roofing product does not automatically make a good roof.

This subject is particularly topical following the NFRC's recent *Right First Time: The Future of Membrane Suitability* discussion at UK Construction Week, which considered how products, specifications, standards and installation need to come together if a roof is genuinely to be considered suitable and high-performing. For me, that starts before a particular membrane is selected.



Investigate First, Specify Second

On refurbishment projects especially, the specification should follow a proper understanding of the existing construction.

What is the structural deck? What is already bonded to it? Is there insulation present and, if so, what type and condition is it in? Is the existing waterproofing sound enough to retain? Are there several generations of previous refurbishment already sitting on top of one another?

A concrete deck behaves differently to plywood, profiled metal or woodwool. An existing reinforced bitumen membrane presents different opportunities and limitations to an aged single-ply roof or mastic asphalt.

The survey should establish as much of this as reasonably possible before the proposed solution is selected. Otherwise, there is a danger of deciding what we want to put on the roof and then trying to make the existing building accommodate it. The specification should follow the investigation, not precede it.

Moisture

The condition of the materials beneath the waterproofing is just as important as what can be seen at the surface. A roof might appear suitable for overlay until core sampling or moisture investigation identifies wet insulation beneath it. Equally, however, finding moisture does not automatically mean that the entire roof needs to be stripped back to the deck.



To discuss your roofing project or for more information, contact Steve Cookson:
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Tel: 07403 902256
LinkedIn: steven-cookson

One wet core tells us that moisture is present at that particular location, not how extensive the problem is across the remainder of the roof. This is another area where a proportionate and independent assessment can be particularly useful.

Where appropriate, further core sampling and non-destructive moisture mapping can be used to build up a much better picture of the distribution of moisture across the roof. The purpose is to distinguish between isolated areas that may be capable of targeted removal and replacement, and widespread saturation where a complete strip is clearly the sensible option.

A manufacturer may understandably take a conservative position where moisture is discovered, particularly where it is being asked to guarantee the completed system. That is entirely reasonable from a warranty perspective, but it is not necessarily the same question as what represents the most proportionate technical solution for the client and the building.

Sometimes the correct answer will be a complete strip and replacement. Sometimes it may be removal of isolated wet areas, followed by refurbishment or overlay of the remaining sound construction. The important point is that the recommendation should follow the evidence rather than a single test result. That distinction can have a considerable effect on cost, disruption, waste and embodied carbon.

Conversely, an older waterproofing system that is dry, well bonded and structurally sound may provide an entirely satisfactory substrate for refurbishment.

This is why I am wary of specifications produced solely from drawings, photographs or a brief visual inspection. If we do not understand what we are specifying onto, it becomes very difficult to make an informed decision about the system that should go back.

Fixing

Attachment is another area where the membrane itself tells only part of the story. A mechanically fixed system relies upon the capacity of the deck and fixings beneath it. A bonded system relies upon the strength and compatibility of the substrate and the adhesive interfaces throughout the build-up. Wind uplift therefore needs to be considered as a system issue, not simply a membrane characteristic.



Sometimes the correct answer will be a complete strip and replacement. Sometimes it may be removal of isolated wet areas, followed by refurbishment or overlay of the remaining sound construction.

On refurbishment projects this can require pull-out testing, confirmation of the existing deck, project-specific wind calculations and consideration of how the proposed insulation and waterproofing will be restrained. The requirement may be perfectly clear in a performance specification, but there is another question that sometimes gets overlooked: who is actually going to provide that information?



Competent Specifier

Performance specifications are extremely useful. Rather than unnecessarily dictating every proprietary component, the specification can establish the performance that the completed roof is required to achieve and allow an appropriate manufacturer and contractor solution to satisfy it. But that does not remove responsibility from the person writing the specification. It is relatively easy to write:

> *"The roofing system manufacturer shall provide all necessary wind-uplift calculations, testing, technical design and a comprehensive system guarantee."*

The more important question is whether the manufacturers likely to tender for the project actually provide all of those services. The answer is not always the same.

Some manufacturers have extensive technical departments and can undertake or arrange project-specific wind calculations, condensation analysis, pull-out testing, detailed design and other supporting work. Others may provide only part of that service and expect certain calculations or assessments to be undertaken elsewhere.

Guarantee scope varies as well. A manufacturer's guarantee might cover the waterproofing system but not necessarily every component within the roof construction. Certain substrates, accessories, interfaces or items designed by others may sit outside it. There may also be particular installation, inspection or approved-contractor requirements that have to be satisfied before the guarantee is issued. None of this means that one manufacturer is necessarily better than another. It means the specifier needs to know what is achievable before promising it within the tender documents.

An experienced independent specifier should understand the market sufficiently to recognise what technical evidence will be required, who can reasonably provide it, where specialist input will be necessary and where responsibility for individual elements of the design sits.

If the specification asks for evidence that the proposed supply chain cannot produce, the problem usually emerges after tender — when changing the requirement becomes considerably more difficult. ■

In Part II, published in January 2027, Steve Cookson will consider the use of test data and certification, particularly in relation to fire. He will also highlight specification of detailing because even if appropriate waterproofing technology has been selected, the detailing can determine whether the roof succeeds or fails. Concluding this two-part series, Steve argues that only through thorough investigation is a good specification possible.



Google KGX1,© Theatro360

Where Can We Still Use Timber?

From thermally modified timber and densified products to fire-rated bamboo, Wayne Richards looks at how new technologies and a better understanding of fire regulations are expanding the possibilities for timber across roofs, terraces and façades.



Timber has been used as a building material for thousands of years, but since the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017 its use on the external envelope has come under unprecedented scrutiny. Greater caution around combustible materials has also created a common misconception: that timber can now only be used at ground-floor level.

That simply isn't the case.

Thermally modified ash has been installed on roof terraces at Battersea Power Station and King's Cross, while elsewhere in Europe timber and bamboo finishes are being continued from façades across pitched roofs. *So how is this possible?*

There is no single rule governing where timber can be used. Building type, height, use, application, fire performance and the construction behind the finish all matter. Just as importantly, timber now encompasses a far wider range of technologies than conventional hardwood and softwood.

The better question is: *where can we use it, and which timber technology is right for the application?*

Timber Has Not Been Banned

The regulations do not impose a blanket ban on timber across the external envelope. What can be used depends on the building, where the material is located and what function it performs.

A timber finish that is acceptable on a low-rise commercial building cannot automatically be transferred to the balcony of a high-rise residential building. Where Regulation 7(2) applies, materials forming part of the external wall and specified attachments must achieve Class A1 or A2-s1,d0, subject to the stated exemptions.

Roofs are different again. Roof terraces remain roofs and their external fire performance is considered as a complete construction under BS EN 13501-5. Timber shingles are recognised within Approved Document B, while modern hidden-fix systems create the possibility of continuing linear timber and bamboo finishes from façades across pitched roofs.

The regulations have not removed timber from the building envelope; they have made understanding where and how we use it more important.

But a product suitable for a façade cannot simply be turned through an angle and installed on a roof. The application has changed, and so has the evidence required.

The regulations have not removed timber from the building envelope; they have made understanding where and how we use it more important.

Not All Timber is the Same

The choices available to today's specifier extend considerably beyond untreated hardwood and softwood. Different technologies alter the original material in very different ways.

Thermally modified timber uses controlled heat to alter the wood. Thermo Ash and Thermo Pine are common examples, improving dimensional stability and durability while retaining the appearance and character of natural timber.

Modified timber changes the chemistry within the wood. Accoya uses acetylation, while Kebony uses a different modification process to permanently alter the timber and improve its performance.

Densified hardwood changes the physical structure of the wood. Hardwood is modified at cellular level and compressed to increase its density, retaining the grain and appearance of natural timber while enhancing stability, durability and fire performance.

Densified bamboo uses a surprisingly similar approach to densified hardwood. Bamboo is thermally modified and compressed into a dense material for external applications. Although botanically a grass, the finished product competes directly with hardwood for decking and cladding and provides a fire-rated option.

These technologies are not simply different ways of achieving the same result. Fire performance, durability, stability, appearance, maintenance and application all influence which material is appropriate.

The question is no longer simply, *can I use timber?* It is, *which timber technology suits this application?*

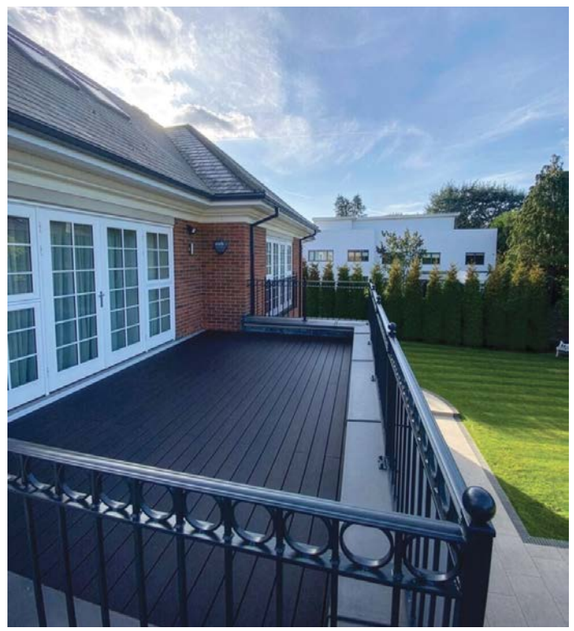
So, where can we still use timber? The answer is: *in more places than many people realise.*

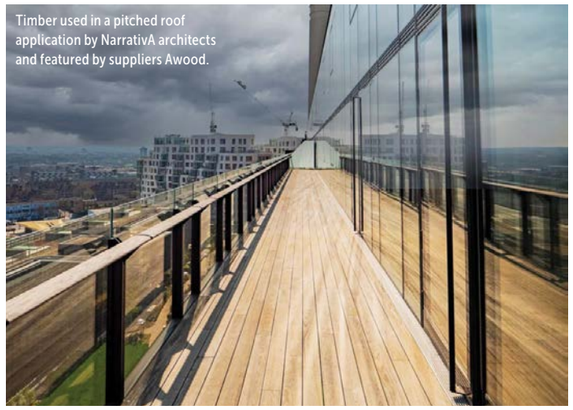
Timber remains an option as a visible finish across façades, soffits, decking, terraces and areas of public realm, subject to the requirements of the building and application. It can also be used on roof terraces, where the decking forms part of a roof build-up rather than simply being treated in the same way as a projecting balcony.

On pitched roofs, timber shingles remain an established roof covering, while modern systems create new opportunities for timber and bamboo to continue from façade to roof as a single architectural finish.

What changes between these applications is not simply the orientation of the board. The regulatory requirements, fire classification and evidence needed to support the specification can change with it.

On a roof terrace, the surface sits above waterproofing and drainage, with support systems and fixings that must work without compromising either.





Timber used in a pitched roof application by NarrativA architects and featured by suppliers Awood.

There is no single height or location at which timber suddenly becomes prohibited. The question is what material, in what application, on what building — and with what evidence?

Specify an Assembly, Not a Board

Choosing the right timber is only part of the specification. A decking board, cladding profile or roof finish does not perform in isolation.

On a roof terrace, the surface sits above waterproofing and drainage, with support systems and fixings that must work without compromising either. On a façade, performance also depends on the substrate, cavity, support system, fixings and required fire protection.

Pitched roofs make the relationship particularly clear. A pitched roof does not have to mean tiles or slates. Timber or bamboo can create a continuous architectural finish from façade to roof, but the construction beneath still has to perform as a roof.

Fire performance reinforces the same principle. A classification achieved by an individual material should not be confused with the classification of the complete construction in its intended application.

Don't specify a board. Specify an assembly — and make sure the evidence supports it.

Timber has not disappeared from the building envelope. It can still provide a natural, durable and distinctive finish across façades, terraces and roofs. What has changed is the level of understanding required to specify it correctly.

New technologies have expanded the materials available, while fire regulations have made it increasingly important to understand the relationship between the material, its application and the complete construction.

The answer to "Where can we still use timber?" is therefore not a list of permitted and prohibited locations. It is wherever the building, application, material and supporting evidence allow it to be used safely and compliantly. ■

Wayne Richards is an independent building-envelope and specification consultant. His CPD, Where Can We Still Use Timber?, explores the fire regulations, material technologies and practical specification considerations behind the use of timber and timber alternatives across façades, terraces and roofs.

For CPD bookings or project-specific specification advice, contact Wayne Richards at hello@forsetiapp.com.

Industry Experts Address Building Safety Act Implications at LRWA Contractor Days

This year's Liquid Roofing and Waterproofing Association (LRWA) Contractor Days, held in the North and South, brought together industry experts to examine the impact of the Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) on roofing contractors, focusing on Designer responsibility, professional liability and demonstrating competence.



Over four years after the Act became law, its implications for the construction industry continue to evolve. The industry continues to interpret what it means in practice for roofing contractors, and how they should respond. Since launching its Contractor Days in 2023, the LRWA has helped members navigate



the challenges through practical guidance and expert insight and this year's events continued that work, addressing the key issues affecting contractors and their businesses.

There are still many misconceptions about the BSA, such as it only applying to higher-risk building (HRBs) such as high-rise residential blocks. However, the BSA has implications for all construction projects that need to meet Building Regulations, including any roofing works.

The BSA introduced duty holder roles with specific legal duties for all those involved in designing and constructing buildings. From the outset, it is essential that contractors understand which role, or roles they are fulfilling as well as their specific legal duties under both the BSA and CDM. This is particularly important if a project involves any potential design work. For example, if a roofing contractor issues a specification, they will automatically become a Designer under the BSA and will be responsible for the associated legal duties - even without a formal contract.

Designer Responsibility & Professional Liability

For roofing contractors, taking on design responsibility can bring additional professional risks and potential liability, making professional indemnity (PI) insurance an important consideration.

The risks surrounding the assumption of a duty holder role were explored at both events by Miller Insurance Services LLP, a specialist broker and member of Build UK. They explained that, under the BSA, if a contractor chooses to change an original design or create a new one, legally, they will automatically become a Designer. If a manufacturer provides a specification or any other form of design such as project specific schedule of components or installation details, they will also become a Designer. If the roofing contractor relies on the manufacturer to provide the specification the contractor may still be considered Principal Designer or Designer.

While an installer working solely to another party's specification may have more limited professional exposure, a design-and-install contractor faces greater potential liability. The greater a contractor's influence over design decisions, the greater their potential professional risk.

The BSA does not impose a general requirement for roofing contractors undertaking design work to hold professional indemnity (PI) insurance. However, contractual terms, client requirements and specific project conditions may require cover. Contractors should check that their insurance adequately reflects their design responsibilities and the risks they undertake. Clients and investors are increasingly pressing for higher limits and broader cover.

PI insurance is generally designed to cover negligence, such as an incorrectly specified waterproofing detail causing water ingress. It may not cover fitness for purpose obligations, product guarantees or warranties, ||-



and some fire safety exposures may be excluded. A building element failing does not automatically mean a claim will be covered. Contractors accepting these obligations alongside specification work should review their contractual liabilities with their insurance broker before committing.

Professional Recognition & Demonstrating Competence

The increased emphasis on competence follows the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, which exposed serious shortcomings in building safety, oversight and aspects of construction practice. The BSA, alongside regulations and industry reforms, have strengthened the focus on competence across the built environment. This encompasses the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB) of individuals, as well as the organisational capability of the businesses responsible for their work.

For those undertaking design work, the role of Designer carries significant professional responsibilities alongside the need to demonstrate appropriate competence. The LRWA's design and specification competence framework for liquid-applied membranes is intended to translate this principle into practice by setting out the SKEB required for these activities within the sector. Following a period of consultation the LRWA design and specification competence framework will be launched for industry adoption in Q4.

While the industry continues to develop competence frameworks and qualifications to address existing gaps, professional recognition can provide an important route for individuals to demonstrate their experience and expertise. Professional bodies



For those undertaking design work, the role of Designer carries significant professional responsibilities alongside the need to demonstrate appropriate competence.

can assess an individual's background and provide structured pathways to recognised professional status. The LRWA recognises the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) as an organisation that supports professional development in the roofing industry.

As part of this work, speakers from the CIOB were invited to the events to provide contractors with an overview of the routes available to professional recognition. These include the Qualified and Experienced Practitioner pathway, which enables eligible experienced professionals to progress to the Professional Review stage of Chartered Membership, and the Roofing Chartered Membership Programme, which offers a route for those without formal qualifications. Chartered status provides an independently assessed benchmark that contractors can use to help evidence the professional standing and capability of their technical staff.

Compliance with Standards

Demonstrating competence in design and specification means understanding the relevant legislation, regulations and industry standards. Published in December 2025, BS 6229:2025 sets out requirements for flat roofs with continuously supported flexible waterproof coverings. The LRWA has been reviewing its technical documents throughout 2026 to reflect the revised standard.

At both events, delegates heard about key changes, including clearer definitions of zero falls and absolute zero falls, and guidance on responsibility for backfalls.

The revised LRWA Guidance Note 14 (GN 14-2026), *Guidance for the Installation of Water Flow Reducing Layers in Inverted Warm Roofs*, recommends an as-built roof deck survey before handover to the roofing contractor. This helps identify areas requiring attention and provides a record of the substrate's condition, helping clarify responsibilities if issues arise later.

The updated *Hot Melt Code of Practice* (version 2.2, August 2026) identifies Electronic Integrity Testing as the recognised on-site verification method, replacing traditional flood testing. Maintaining test results and supporting documentation helps contractors demonstrate compliance and contribute to the building's information record where required.

These updates highlight the importance of keeping technical knowledge current and aligning specifications, installation practices and records with applicable standards and guidance.

Building Skills

Meeting industry standards depends on a skilled workforce capable of delivering high-quality workmanship. At the Contractor Days, GLA Group highlighted prison-based training as a route into roofing. The initiative began in 2019 for men nearing the end of their sentences. GLA Group now runs courses in 17 UK prisons, including training in liquid-applied membranes.

Before training begins, GLA works with employers to identify job opportunities for trainees upon release. Each course concludes with an employment meeting, followed by ongoing contact to support trainees as they transition into work. The programme currently places an average of one trainee a month into employment.

With the industry continuing to need skilled operatives, contractors with vacancies may wish to consider offering opportunities to people completing the programme.

With design responsibility, competence and professional liability under increasing scrutiny, Sarah Spink, CEO of the LRWA, said: "Contractors who write specifications need to understand their responsibilities under the Building Safety Act, demonstrate their competence and ensure their insurance provides appropriate cover."

The LRWA Contractor Days help members navigate these evolving requirements and maintain the standards expected across the industry.

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Why Fastener Focus is Key to Resisting Environmental Impacts

One of the most important ways to ensure a metal building envelope will retain its visual appeal for the duration of its design life is to specify the correct type and grade of fasteners. Brian Mack, Technical Business Development Manager at EJOT UK explains why.





Whether the fastener head requires a light or dark colour to match the cladding, Colorfast can provide a solution for lasting visual appeal.

Despite covering the relatively small surface area of a metal façade or roof, if the fasteners used for installation are manufactured from the wrong grade of metal, or if the coloured heads are not of a sufficient quality to withstand the effects of long term exposure to the weather and sunlight, they will soon become a major, unwelcome presence.

To explain why, it is important to understand how fasteners are designed to work, and why the materials used in their manufacture ultimately determine how well they will resist environmental impacts, particularly those resulting from long term exposure to moisture and the pollutants it contains.

Industry guidance from key organisations such as BRE and RICS recognises that while façade systems may remain technically serviceable for decades, their aesthetic performance often declines much earlier due to weathering, pollution and UV exposure, creating refurbishment pressures well before the end of their nominal design life. This means that for commercial and public buildings, the most commonly recorded defects are visual, not structural.

Why does this matter if the fundamental performance of the building envelope may be largely unaffected? One major reason is that poor façade appearance is often the main driver for building owners embarking on unplanned maintenance spending. This is particularly so where tenants and other stakeholders demand action when façades start to show signs of staining, corrosion or misalignment. As a result, the occupier's demand for action to address the building's poor external appearance can often escalate into full refurbishment programmes, even if the façade remains weathertight. Their commercial pressure can, therefore, prove extremely costly for building owners.

While façade systems may remain technically serviceable for decades, their aesthetic performance often declines much earlier due to weathering, pollution and UV exposure, creating refurbishment pressures well before the end of their nominal design life.

How Good Fastener Design Prevents Issues

If a fastener is not able to perform its function of attaching a façade or roof panel to the building structure or substrate effectively, that can easily become a source of corrosion for the cladding or roof sheet. This is why fasteners which are designed to easily achieve a good seal above the sheet are so beneficial. It is one of the reasons behind the continued popularity of EJOT Colorfast self-drilling fasteners featuring an over-moulded head. Now in their third generation, around 700 million Colorfast fasteners have been sold in the UK and internationally after more than 30 years in the market.

Firstly, they feature a high quality integrated metal/EPDM vulcanised washer which has a composition designed to withstand continuous temperature fluctuations and building

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movement, as well as the atmospheric elements originating from the external and internal environments. A good seal is, of course, also hugely important in terms of the thermal performance of the envelope, which the washer helps by reducing heat transfer through the fastener itself.

For the washer to be most effective, however, it also has to be compressed to the correct level – too much or too little, and moisture ingress may result. This can lead to corrosion forming around the hole in the metal sheet. Colorfast is designed to enable optimum compression through a Torx drive moulded into the head, offering direct transmission of torque when using an appropriate screw gun. The screw onto which the Colorfast head is moulded enhances ease of installation further. Products such as the EJOT JT-3, JT-6 and JF-3 all feature an optimised thread and drill point to ensure the fasteners can be safely installed to an accurate standard at maximum efficiency.



EJOT Colorfast fasteners in several different colours played a key role in meeting the aesthetic goals for this new industrial development in Birmingham.

For the washer to be most effective, it has to be compressed to the correct level – too much or too little, and moisture ingress may result. This can lead to corrosion forming around the hole in the metal sheet.

Choosing Steel Grades

In addition to the potential for corrosion of the metal sheet around the hole, the fastener itself could corrode and cause rusty streaks to run down the façade or roof if it is unsuitable for local environmental conditions. Hence, it is important to check the fastener specification at an early stage to ensure it is appropriate for the location

With EJOT Colorfast, for example, three types of metal are available for the fasteners. For buildings located in areas with a lower risk of corrosion, the carbon steel with an organic coating version will be perfectly adequate. However, in projects where the risk of corrosion is higher, such as coastal areas or due to emissions from industrial processes housed in the building, A2 or A4 stainless steel fasteners should be used. These grades may also be required where the client is seeking a minimum guarantee period.



Over 400 colours are available for Colorfast, in line with recognised colour matching systems such as RAL, NCS and Pantone, as well as the British Standards (BS) colour palette.

Colour Consistency

A final aesthetic consideration for all colour-matched fasteners is how well the powder coated finish or over-moulded head will stand the test of time.

The colour coating on powder coated fasteners is prone to being chipped or damaged during installation, simply due to the process of engaging the driver bit and the variability of site conditions. This has implications for long term corrosion resistance if it is a carbon steel fastener, potentially damaging the steel's coating and exposing the metal to the elements. And, should rusting occur, it will not only have an aesthetic impact but potentially result in water and air ingress, or even detachment of the roof and cladding panel.

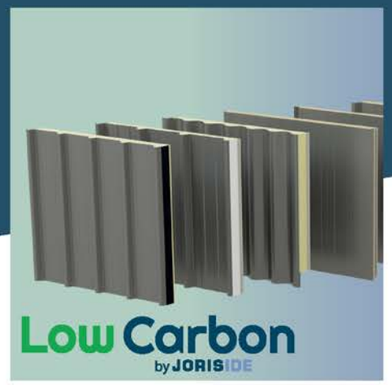
With a Colorfast screw, the engineering-grade nylon over-moulded head is extremely difficult to damage as it encapsulates the whole hex head, meaning this issue can be avoided. The head's colour is also resistant to UV light, with a composition that has been continuously refined and developed in response to changing international standards since the product's inception. This helps to ensure the colour of the panels and fastener heads remains consistent over the façade or roof's lifetime.

Find out more about EJOT Colorfast at www.ejot.co.uk/colorfast_hub.

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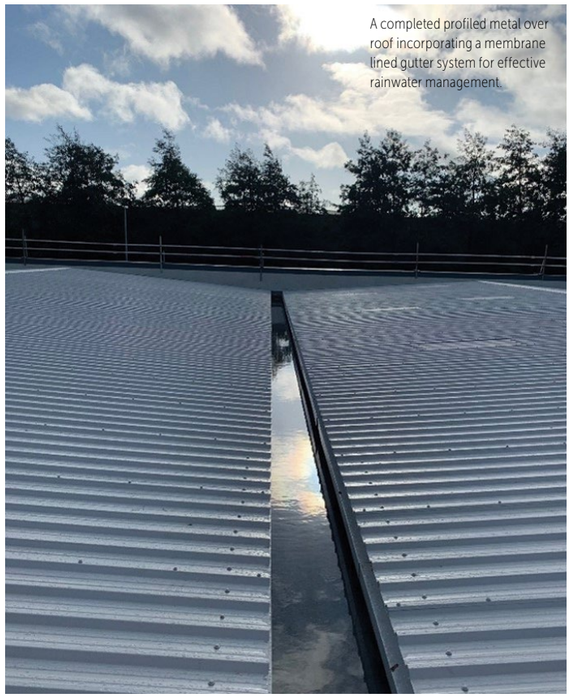


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Unlocking Metal's Refurbishment Potential with Confidence

With building refurbishment increasingly preferred over demolition and rebuild for their sustainability advantages, understanding the different renovation approaches for metal cladding and roofing, their feasibility and the associated best practice is more important than ever. Carlton Jones, Director of the MCRMA, explains more and how the organisation's technical guidance can help.





A completed profiled metal over roof incorporating a membrane lined gutter system for effective rainwater management.

Across the UK industrial and commercial property sectors, refurbishment of buildings with a metal building envelope is now favoured where the primary structure remains sound. For many building owners, this means refurbishment has moved from being a necessary maintenance task – often reactively to resolve an unanticipated problem – to something that's at the core of their asset management strategy.

Amongst the main drivers for this shift include net-zero objectives of clients, which puts greater scrutiny on the embodied carbon of buildings, as well as finding the most cost effective solution to deliver operational and aesthetic improvements during a period of ever rising construction costs. Hence, for many clients refurbishment is an appealing way to extend the life of existing assets while significantly improving their performance, appearance and energy efficiency.

Which Types of Refurbishment are Feasible?

If you are a roofing or cladding contractor invited by a client to advise on which refurbishment approach to take on a project, the advice and guidance available in the MCRMA Guidance Documents and associated publications can prove extremely useful. However, the first stage of any metal roof or cladding refurbishment has to be a comprehensive condition survey.

Only by assessing the extent of corrosion, coating degradation, weather tightness and structural integrity, is it possible to determine whether a repair, renovation, over-cladding or complete replacement strategy is appropriate and the most cost-effective solution.

Condition surveys are carried out by an independent inspector or building envelope consultant, but a chartered building surveyor or façade engineer may also offer this service depending on the scope of the survey. They provide a report with recommendations, allowing for the options to be appraised and costed, and once the refurbishment approach is agreed they can also assist with preparing the specification.

There are a number of suitably qualified and experienced inspectors and consultants available within the MCRMA's membership who can assist at this stage.

Ensuring Refurbishment Can be Done Safely

Whichever approach is preferred by the building owner, before embarking on a project it is crucial to determine if the work can be completed safely. Working in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act and the CDM Regulations is not optional, so it is important to ensure you understand what compliant working involves. The MCRMA Guidance Document GD 18 *Guidance to the Construction (Design And Management) Regulations 2015* may be helpful here.

One of the most important safety considerations is to assess the fragility or non-fragility of the existing roof and any rooflights. Guidance in this area is provided in the MCRMA Guidance Document *GD 13 Non-Fragility of Roofs: A Checklist* developed in conjunction with the Advisory Committee for Roofsafety (ACR).

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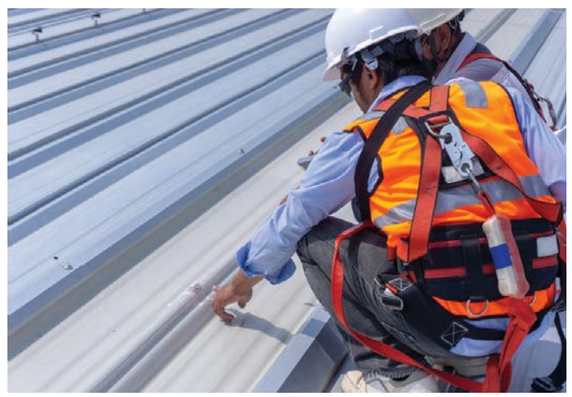
Considerations

Over-roofing or over-cladding can be an excellent way to provide a thermal upgrade with improved aesthetics without having to remove the existing roof substrate. That makes this type of refurbishment appealing to building owners from an operational perspective, in that it will cause very minimal disruption to day-to-day users compared to a strip and re-roof project.

In addition, over-roofing has sustainability advantages in that there is very little waste generated and the lifespan of building can be significantly extended beyond its original design life. The thermal improvements will also enable occupiers to reduce energy consumption for heating and cooling, lowering operational carbon emissions for the building.

To help inform decisions about this type of refurbishment, the MCRMA has published the *GD38 Over-Roofing Guidance Document*. This provides best-practice guidance when installing a new roof over an existing one, with advice on how best to improve weatherproofing, thermal performance, building longevity and operational efficiency.

The guidance also outlines key considerations including structural suitability, health and safety, Building Regulations compliance, insulation upgrades, fire performance, and the detailing of over-roof systems on existing metal, fibre cement and composite panel roofs.



The first step to refurbishment of a metal building envelope is a condition survey conducted by a suitably qualified individual.



Metal roofs affected by issues such as cut edge corrosion can be refurbished extremely effectively to extend the life of the building envelope.

Specialist Coatings

Refurbishment using specialist coating systems has become another increasingly common method of extending the service life of appropriate metal roof and cladding assemblies. After establishing suitability through a condition survey, the first step involves identifying areas of deterioration so they can be repaired and treated.

High-performance coating systems can then be applied to restore and enhance the weathering performance of the building envelope while providing long-term protection against corrosion, UV exposure and environmental pollutants. In addition to improving the aesthetic appearance, a professionally specified coating refurbishment programme can delay the need for replacement, minimise disruption to building operations and reduce material consumption and waste.

Whilst there is no Guidance Document published currently to provide assistance on best practice in this type of refurbishment, the MCRMA's membership includes providers of specialist coating solutions who would be able to offer advice.

Gutter & Drainage Upgrades

A final important refurbishment aspect in relation to the metal building envelope is effective rainwater management. As a key factor in long term envelope performance, upgrading gutters and drainage systems helps protect the building from water ingress, corrosion and structural deterioration, while ensuring the refurbished roof system can continue to perform reliably for decades to come.

From an asset management perspective, ageing gutters are frequently among the first elements to deteriorate on industrial and commercial buildings. Corrosion, failed joints, blockages and inadequate drainage capacity can lead to overflow during heavy rainfall, causing damage to façades, foundations, internal finishes and stock. Refurbishment therefore provides an opportunity not only to repair defects but also to increase drainage capacity where rainfall intensity or building use has changed.

Best practice on how to handle rainwater management in refurbishment projects is covered in the MCRMA GD38 Guidance Document, and further assistance can be provided by a number of member companies, including one company providing a variety of specialist gutter refurbishment systems. ■

Find out more on the topics covered here at www.mcrma.co.uk or get in touch with the MCRMA if you are seeking specific assistance with a metal envelope refurbishment project.

The Race to the Bottom – Selling Value Versus Cost

Price has always been a significant driver in the sector, and now, margins have got tighter, budgets have shrunk and building activity has slowed, all leading to a race to the bottom when it comes to cost. Running parallel is the requirement for Building Safety Act compliance. Richard Allen, of PermaRoofUK, explores how this perfect storm is exactly where responsible selling has to be prioritised.



The cheapest or most familiar system can be an easy sell to roofing contractors. However, responsible selling starts with the roof itself: its size and use, the condition of the deck, drainage, detailing and the customer's expectations for service life and maintenance.

Traditional bitumen products remain a familiar choice for flat roofing and, when correctly specified and installed, can provide effective waterproofing. Their performance depends on product quality, roof design and workmanship, as poor installation can leave the roof vulnerable to blistering, cracking, splits and water ingress. Alongside these performance considerations, rising insurance premiums for torch-applied systems can increase the overall project cost, an expense that is sometimes overlooked when comparing roofing options.

In contrast, PVC and EPDM are both single-ply membranes, but they have different characteristics and installation methods. PVC systems typically use hot-air-welded seams and may suit larger commercial roofs, while EPDM can be practical for the smaller domestic, as well as commercial, projects undertaken by many contractors. EPDM's key benefit is longevity: a correctly designed and installed system can provide a service life of c. 70 years. Resistant to UV, ozone and weathering, its flexibility allows it to accommodate temperature changes and normal building movement. That can mean fewer cracks and splits, reduced maintenance and less disruption over the roof's lifetime.

Despite its benefits, EPDM continues to compete with felt's familiarity and lower upfront cost. Responsible selling means looking beyond the initial price and explaining how installation, lifespan, maintenance and warranty support affect whole-life value and customers' desired outcomes.

Specification Versus Price

Contractors will always have a budget, but upfront price and long-term value are not the same thing. A lower quotation may become more expensive if the roof requires frequent repairs, early replacement or additional maintenance. Paying more initially for a durable system can therefore offer better value over its working life.

SME contractors have an important role in making this distinction clear. Rather than leading with price alone, they should consider the building's use, the customer's expectations and the roof's maintenance requirements, while clearly explaining the complete system being proposed. After all, even the best membrane will underperform if the build-up and installation is wrong.

Building Safety

The Building Safety Act's (BSA) gateway process is mandatory for high risk buildings of 7 storeys or 18 meters high. While it won't apply for most projects, the importance of building safety has never been more vital for the whole sector.



The Act's stipulation of competence, product information and accountability is influencing the whole industry. For specific projects, this means understanding the building and its requirements, recommending suitable materials, using compatible components and following installation guidance.

Keeping clear records of the products used and checking any proposed changes can help contractors demonstrate that the work has been properly planned and carried out. These straightforward steps give customers greater confidence that their roof is fit for purpose and can be supported in the future.

Supporting Contractors

Independent contractors cannot be expected to navigate every product development or regulatory change alone. Manufacturers and suppliers should support them with practical training, clear installation guidance and access to technical advice, helping them choose and install complete, compatible systems.

That support should begin at the point of sale. A responsible supplier asks about the project before recommending a product, explains certification and warranty requirements and knows when a technical query needs to be escalated. This gives the contractor greater confidence in the specification and helps avoid mistakes that can erode already tight margins. Ultimately, responsible selling is not about promoting the most expensive system or one material for every roof. It is about giving contractors the information and support to recommend a safe, compliant and appropriate system – helping their customers understand the long-term value behind that recommendation.

PermaRoofUK is a national distributor of flat roofing solutions. Learn more at https://www.permaroof.co.uk/.



Beyond Compensation: How Legal Support can Help Rebuild Lives after Serious Injury

When people think about serious injury claims, compensation is often the first thing that comes to mind.

It's understandable. Financial settlements are usually the most visible outcome of a legal claim and often attract the headlines. But for many people living with life-changing injuries, some of the most important support arrives long before a case concludes.

At Slater & Gordon, our focus is not simply on securing a final settlement. It is about helping clients access the rehabilitation, treatment, equipment and practical support needed to maximise recovery and independence at a time when they need it most.

For scaffolder Steven, life changed in an instant when he suffered a serious electric shock while working on a construction site near overhead power lines. The incident caused catastrophic injuries, leaving him with severe burns, permanent damage to his hands and a lengthy recovery ahead.

Steven was unable to hold his newborn child for months because he had no feeling in his hands. Tasks many people take for granted, such as preparing food, tying shoelaces or driving a car, suddenly became major challenges.

Like many families facing serious injury, Steven's family was dealing with far more than medical treatment alone. They were navigating uncertainty about the future, adjusting to a new reality and trying to rebuild family life around Steven's injuries. This is where specialist legal support can play an important role.

In serious injury cases, recovery cannot wait for a claim to conclude. While legal proceedings often take years, an individual's need for rehabilitation and support begins almost immediately. Early legal intervention can help facilitate access to services that support recovery, including rehabilitation programmes, specialist therapies, case management, care packages and assistive equipment.

These interventions are often transformative, not because they change the injury itself, but because they help people regain control over their lives.

They also require collaboration between healthcare professionals, rehabilitation providers, case managers, charities, support organisations and legal teams, all working towards the same goal: helping the individual achieve the best quality of life possible. And working with a legal partner experienced in serious injury can bring all of this together.

At Slater and Gordon, we have seen first-hand how early access to rehabilitation and practical support can influence recovery, confidence and independence. Over the past three decades, we have supported thousands of people whose lives have been changed by brain injuries, spinal injuries, amputations and other catastrophic injuries.

What many of them tell us is that the most meaningful outcomes are not necessarily financial.

They talk about returning home after months in hospital. About being able to access a property independently. About returning to work, spending time with family or regaining confidence in everyday life. They talk about achieving milestones they once thought might no longer be possible.

Those experiences have informed our new Life Continues, Differently campaign, which aims to highlight the realities of adapting to life after serious injury while raising awareness of the support available to help people move forward.

Because while serious injury may change a person's life forever, it should never define what they are able to achieve next.

And while compensation plays an important role in that journey, it is often the rehabilitation, practical support and early intervention delivered along the way that make the greatest difference to how that future is rebuilt.

To learn more about serious injury support, visit slatergordon.co.uk.



Starting at the Top: Why Flat Roof Fire Protection Must Adapt to an Evolving Risk Landscape

What was traditionally a simple solution to keeping a building watertight has developed into something far more complex. Flat roofs are now modern, multi-functional spaces hosting everything from energy technologies to parking and storage facilities. Justin Lewis, Head of Roofing at ROCKWOOL UK, discusses why specifying non-combustible insulation is crucial to meeting the evolving performance expectations for flat roofs.



The rise of retrofit practices, an urgent need to adapt to climate change and pressure to optimise the functional footprint of a building have all led the construction industry to look up for inspiration.

Increased use of rooftop solar, green roofs, and rooftop amenities are expanding performance expectations beyond traditional weatherproofing. However, these changes in purpose affect a range of issues from structural limits to regulatory requirements.

Coinciding with this boom in innovative flat roof design, fire safety standards implemented across the planning, construction, management and use of buildings have undergone intense critical evaluation. Addressing risk remains firmly in focus, with the Building Safety Act and creation of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) calling on professionals to better evidence both competency and compliance. Together these changes mean flat roof specifiers are facing an increasingly complex set of design and regulatory challenges.

A Non-Combustible Approach

Solar panel installations are a simple, practical and efficient method of meeting clean energy ambitions. However, alongside their growing use, more fires related to rooftop solar PV systems have been reported, raising concerns about fire safety implications. In August, business insurer QBE published data showing UK fire services attended 212 fires involving solar panels in 2025, more than double the 91 recorded in 2022. As a result, QBE warned that precautions are needed to mitigate fire risks and also advised to avoid mounting solar panels on combustible roofs.

In addition, a literature review commissioned by the BSR found that adding solar panels above roofing materials can intensify 'heat flux' – increasing how much heat flows through the roof surface, potentially accelerating fire spread, introducing additional fuel load and extending burning duration. Importantly, the review highlighted that current external fire spread tests for roofs, and corresponding classifications, such as BroofT4, do not address or have the means to consider the unique fire dynamics introduced by PV installations.

The fire risks of solar PV are also recognised by RC62, a joint code of practice for fire safety in solar PV panel installations, developed by RISCAuthority and the Microgeneration Certification Scheme, with the support of Solar Energy UK and published by the Fire Protection Association. It acknowledges that PV systems introduce new ignition sources, modify heat transfer and fire spread behaviour, and create constraints on firefighting intervention. To address these risks, RC62 recommends that PV installations should be installed on non-combustible roofs achieving class A1 or A2-s1,d0 to BS EN 13501-1

Managing this gap in the fire testing standards can be achieved by future-proofing the performance of new roofs. This involves adopting proactive design, material, and spatial strategies that look beyond basic requirements, such as considering non-combustible materials as part of the roof build-up, treating the roof as the building's 'fifth façade', and ensuring that penetrations are adequately fire-stopped where required.

These considerations are becoming increasingly important particularly as emerging EU guidance also supports the use of roof insulation achieving class A1 or A2 to EN 13501-1, beneath solar PV. Draft fire safety guidance for Building-Applied Photovoltaic systems, prepared for the European Commission's DG ENER to support the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, describes the use of such roof insulation as the "single most effective fire safety measure available at the design stage" and states that roof insulation type is the dominant determinant of maximum fire size beneath a PV array.

The Fifth Facade

Like roofs with PV arrays, roof terraces can also introduce fire-safety risks due to external factors such as a build-up of debris, outdoor activities and other potential ignition sources. Similarly, rooftop plant rooms can introduce potential ignition sources associated with machinery, electrical equipment, hot surfaces and maintenance activities.

Changes to legislation have banned the use of combustible materials in the external walls of relevant buildings, predominantly those over 18m. However, this

In August, business insurer QBE published data showing UK fire services attended 212 fires involving solar panels in 2025, more than double the 91 recorded in 2022.

ban only partially extends beyond walls and certain attachments, excluding roofs. With the building safety regime becoming increasingly prescriptive there is a clear case for looking beyond today's minimum regulatory requirements.

Building Regulations and associated fire safety guidance, such as Approved Document B, stipulate minimum fire safety standards, however designing beyond these baselines provides significant long-term benefits. A best practice approach for future proofing specifications and buildings considers the fire performance of the complete roof build-up, including the reaction-to-fire performance of the constituent materials, the fire resistance of relevant elements or assemblies, and the provision of robust fire protection measures where necessary.

In ROCKWOOL's whitepaper, *Flat roofs: Managing fire risk in the fifth façade*, one of the most straightforward ways to approach compliance with fire safety requirements is to use non-combustible insulation materials, those achieving Euroclass A1 and A2, s1-d0 to BS EN 13501-1, in all flat roof constructions. Non-combustible insulation can form part of a robust roof fire-safety strategy while also delivering the thermal and acoustic performance required by the building design.

This aligns with the preference of a number of insurers, including Zurich, AXA and Aviva, which is to only install solar panels on entirely non-combustible roofs. It is also consistent with RC62, which recommends that PV installations are installed on non-combustible roofs achieving class A1 or A2-s1,d0, to BSE EN 13501-1 and broadly reflects the direction of emerging draft EU DG ENER guidance, which recommends the use of insulation achieving class A1 or A2 to EN 13501-1, beneath PV systems as noted above.

In addition to supporting passive fire protection strategies, the use of non-combustible materials can help simplify fire-safe specification and design by reducing reliance on additional measures needed to manage the higher fire risk of combustible materials. Clear specification of material fire performance can also support transparent design decisions and the accurate recording of fire safety information throughout the building lifecycle.



The Right Solution

A strong specification approach begins with clearly defined performance requirements, including the reaction-to-fire performance of constituent products and, where relevant, the fire performance of the complete roof system. Being able to rely on independently verified performance data is critical to bringing these requirements to life.

Specifiers should review relevant Declarations of Performance (DoP), conformity marking, classification and test reports and applicable third-party certification.

Roof loading, energy efficiency and overall durability and performance also need to be considered together with fire protection as solar solutions become the new norm and buildings expand upwards.

Partnering with manufacturers who demonstrate transparency through recognised industry assurance schemes such as the Construction Code for Product Information, providing evidence of robust and transparent product-information processes, is also considered best practice.

However, specification is only one element of what must be a unified approach to building safety and performance. Through collaboration at the early design stage, architects, specifiers, product manufacturers and contractors all have the opportunity to share technical knowledge, established guidance and industry-recommended approaches to deliver robust, future-proof buildings.

Life After a Serious Roofing Injury

A serious workplace accident can change everything in an instant. Roofing is skilled, physical work that isn't without risk. Handling equipment, changing weather conditions and working at a height can mean that if an accident does happen, the consequences can be serious.

An injury can change everyday life in ways that are difficult to foresee. There may be a period of rehabilitation ahead, questions about returning to work, and financial concerns about paying bills and supporting a family. Therefore, understanding the support available if you have experienced an injury at work, can make everything that comes next a little clearer.



More than Compensation

When people think about making a claim, compensation is often the first thing that comes to mind. But for many injured workers and their families, the support they receive during recovery can be just as important.

The impact of a serious injury goes beyond physical health. It can impact family life, independence, employment and everyday activities that many of us take for granted. A roofer recovering from a serious injury may suddenly find simple tasks difficult, while concerns about work, finances and the future can place additional pressure on the whole family.

The impact of a serious injury goes beyond physical health. It can impact family life, independence, employment and everyday activities that many of us take for granted.

That's why at Slater & Gordon we believe early rehabilitation is so important.

Recovery is Different for Everyone

After a serious injury at work, the immediate priority is, of course, seeking medical treatment. However, recovery from a life-changing injury can extend beyond the initial stage of hospital care and is different for everyone, depending on the level of injury an individual has experienced.

For some, ongoing rehabilitation could include physiotherapy as well as psychological support for emotional wellbeing, and, depending on the severity of their injuries, they could also require specialist equipment or adaptations to their home.

Getting back to work can be another significant concern. Given roofing is a physically demanding job, and the chance an injury could affect mobility, returning to the same role could be difficult. Therefore, an important part of recovery is helping someone explore ways of returning to their existing job or explore different forms of work.

However, it is important to note that recovery isn't simply about getting somebody back to work. It is about helping them regain as much independence as possible and understanding that life can continue in a fulfilling way, even if it looks different to before.

How Slater & Gordon Can Help

At Slater & Gordon, our specialist personal injury lawyers work with medical professionals, rehabilitation specialists and case managers to understand what someone needs now and is likely to need in the future. This could include specialist medical treatment and rehabilitation, specialist equipment, possible adaptations to someone's home, loss of current and/or future earnings, and the possibility of returning to work. Our team can also look at the circumstances surrounding an injury, gather evidence, as well as help establish what happened and who may have been at fault.

With our *Life Continues, Differently* campaign, we're raising awareness of the challenges people face after serious injury and the support available. Because whilst life can change in ways you don't expect after injury, we work with you to understand what you need, now and in the future - helping you regain control and shape what comes next.

To learn more about serious injury support, visit slatergordon.co.uk.

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Proctor Group Supplies Membrane Products to Social Bite Villages



Proctor Group has helped homelessness charity Social Bite to create new supported village communities. The charity helps people to transform their lives and leave homelessness behind for good. Since 2012, its varied work has seen it move into developing the Social Bite Village – a housing model which, by the end of 2026, will be replicated across three sites. Social Bite engaged modular construction specialists Ecosystems Technologies to manufacture the living spaces for the sites. As part of the design and specification process, Proctor provided membranes and accessories free of charge to help deliver high-quality homes.

Proctor Group supplied three different membranes to the project: Wraptite® UV, which combines properties of vapour permeability and airtightness in one self-adhering product; Procheck® Adapt, a variable-permeability vapour control layer which is capable of adapting to changes in humidity levels; and Proctor Air®, an air and vapour permeable, water-resistant roofing underlay. MD Keira Proctor said: “Supporting this transformative initiative with our membrane solutions aligns with our company values. It has been a privilege to contribute to spaces that are not only built to last but also meaningful in the lives of those they support.” Find out more: https://proctorgroup.com/products/wraptite-uv; https://proctorgroup.com/products/procheck-adapt; https://proctorgroup.com/products/proctor-air.

Cupa Pizarras Introduces 100-Year Guarantee on All Natural Slate Products



CUPA PIZARRAS is reinforcing its commitment to quality and long-term performance with the introduction of a 100-year guarantee on all its natural slate products for the UK market. The guarantee reflects the company’s unique position as a quarry owner, meaning it can provide customers with direct quality assurances from the source of the material rather than through a third-party. CUPA controls every stage of the process, from geological assessment and extraction, through to processing and quality control. This direct involvement throughout the supply chain provides specifiers, contractors and homeowners with confidence in both product quality and performance. The 100-year guarantee strengthens the credentials of CUPA 12 and Heavy 3 natural slate products. Both products are supported by independently verified Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), providing transparent environmental data to support informed specification decisions and helping projects meet sustainability requirements.

Natural slate remains one of the most durable roofing materials available, with a proven lifespan that can exceed a century. By combining EPDs with a market-leading guarantee, CUPA is providing specifiers with a compelling solution for projects where longevity, sustainability and performance are paramount. Visit: https://www.cupapizarras.com/uk/100-years-guarantee/.

Bloor’s Dairy Improves Herd Health and Productivity with Marlon CST Heatguard



Brett Martin’s Marlon CST Heatguard has been installed for the roof of a milking shed at Bloor’s Farm in Cheshire. The roofing solution has helped to improve levels of light, while reducing energy costs and enhancing the cows’ welfare and productivity. Home to a herd of 350 cows, Bloor’s Farm needed additional space, and brought in a second-hand building, which was modified to act as a new milking shed. After learning about Marlon CST Heatguard, owner Matthew Bloor selected the corrugated polycarbonate sheet for the roofing. The amount of daylight introduced by the Brett Martin solution improved light levels in the refurbished shed, making a truly positive impact across the farm. It has helped to create a bright and pleasant working environment for staff without the need for artificial lighting.

Manufactured in the UK and developed with advanced heat reflective pigments, Marlon CST Heatguard reduces solar transmissions by 68%, whilst achieving 36% light transmission to improve animal’s wellbeing and productivity, without the risk of excessive heat gain. Marlon CST Heatguard can be used as a complete roof covering or incorporated into cladding or profile roofing. Furthermore, Marlon CST Heatguard has the impact resistance and durability of standard polycarbonate sheeting, but with added insulation and rigidity due to its multiwall structure. Visit: www.brettmartin.com.

AJW Roofing & Cladding Supplies Unveils Refreshed Brand Identity

AJW Roofing & Cladding Supplies has announced the launch of its refreshed brand identity, marking the next chapter in the company’s continued growth across the region. Over the years, AJW has welcomed new customers, expanded its product range and strengthened its presence across East Anglia and beyond. As the business looks towards the future, the company felt it was the right time for its brand to evolve too. The refreshed identity will see a new logo introduced across AJW’s depots, vehicles, website, catalogues and marketing materials over the coming months. But while the look may be changing, the things that matter most are staying the same. Charlotte Woods, AJW Marketing Director, said: “We wanted to develop the AJW branding to showcase what we are all about: roofing and cladding. We are proud to launch our new logo which reflects the continued growth of the business and our commitment to the customers we serve.”

The refreshed brand identity is part of AJW’s ongoing commitment to supporting its customers and building on the strong foundations established over the years. The look is new. The name is familiar. The commitment remains. For more information, visit https://ajwdistribution.com/ or follow the company on social media.

Garland UK Cuts Emissions by 12% in Third Annual Sustainability Report



Garland UK has published its third annual Sustainability Report, revealing a 12% reduction in total emissions against its 2023 baseline. Total emissions fell to 287,064 tCO2e in 2025, down 4% year-on-year and 12% below baseline. Scope 1 emissions are down 18% against baseline, while Scope 3 emissions, which account for 99% of Garland UK’s footprint, fell by 12%. Business travel and inbound freight showed particularly strong improvement, down 37% and 46% respectively on 2024. The report also reaffirms Garland UK’s carbon neutral status across Scope 1 and 2 emissions, achieved in 2025 by offsetting 60 tonnes of carbon through the Solar Lighting for Families in Zambia project, certified by Gold Standard.

Mark Fisher, General Manager at Garland UK, commented, “In 2025, Garland UK achieved carbon neutrality across Scope 1 and 2 emissions, a goal we set out to reach and have now delivered through real, verified action. It is a moment that reflects years of disciplined data collection, supplier engagement and operational change, and it sets a new benchmark for what our industry should expect of itself.” The full 2025 Garland UK Sustainability Report can be read here: https://online.flippingbook.com/view/1068191850/.

Reducing Risk and Maximising Quality in Metal Roofing and Façade Projects



The range of technical guidance documents, design guides and advice notes published by the MCRMA provides an essential knowledge-base for installers looking to deliver building regulations compliant metal projects with confidence while exceeding client quality expectations. Available free to download in PDF format at www.mcrma.co.uk, these documents give architects, design specialists, engineers and installers involved in metal building envelope projects expert technical insights and best practice. Developed over more than 35 years, the quality of these publications is renowned across the roofing and cladding sector, not only in the UK but internationally. Most importantly, the publications offer a clear route to delivering compliant projects because they are written collaboratively by working groups involving technical specialists representing manufacturers, designers and installers.

The result is a library of practical guidance on the correct way to use products and systems in all the most common types of application, as well as how to handle more unusual requirements. A number of the MCRMA guidance documents are also approved as online CPDs by the CPD Certification Service, making them an excellent set of resources for anyone involved in a formal training and development programme.

A Tested Mitigation Layer Cover Board



DensDeck® Prime Roof Board is manufactured specifically for roofing applications, providing a resilient A1 classified cover board layer that helps strengthen and protect the entire roof system. Its glass-mat-faced gypsum core delivers fire performance along with compressive strength and resistance to challenging roof system conditions.

DensDeck Prime Roof Board is featured in over 200K ‘Factory Mutual (FM) Approved’ roof assemblies, tested in many configurations to FM4470. It has been on the US market with FM Approval & UL classification for nearly 40 years. DensDeck Prime Roof Board integrates easily into flat roof assemblies. It may add strength, fire resistance and durability to the system. Acting as a protective cover board layer, it helps safeguard thermal insulation and waterproofing layers from rooftop traffic and equipment loads while supporting the additional performance demands often associated with BAPV-mounted roof systems and modern commercial roofing standards.

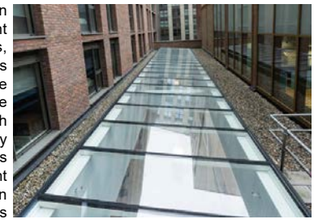
DensDeck Prime Roof Boards are versatile additions to a variety of commercial roof systems:

- **Cover board**: DensDeck Prime Roof Boards provide a durable layer.
- **Substrate board**: DensDeck Prime Roof Board can help provide acoustic and fire resistance - fire from below.
- **Recovery board**: over existing roof systems, a layer of DensDeck Prime Roof Board mechanically fixed to the structure offers a flat surface for insulation layer installation.
- **Parapet board**: DensDeck Prime Roof Board can be used to support Vapour Control Layer (VCL) and waterproofing layers.

Gypsum is a mineral widely used in building materials because of its natural fire resistance and dimensional stability. In DensDeck Prime Roof Board, the gypsum core is manufactured for exterior roofing applications to perform within demanding commercial roof assemblies. A gypsum core provides structural stability and dimensional durability, while fibreglass mat facers on the front and back surfaces help provide composite strength to the board and support resistance to impact and fire exposure.

DensDeck Prime Roof Board provides multiple benefits, like increasing the force required to puncture the waterproofing layer vs. force required without a cover board. DensDeck Prime Roof Board continues to provide broad compatibility and high performance with many roofing adhesives, and in many cases, no primer is needed when bonding directly to the coated face. Suitability for direct bonding or torching to DensDeck Prime Roof Board should be assessed by the system designer. Visit: https://www.buildgp.com/uk.

Nelson Place is Top of the Class at Letting Light In



Nelson Place, one of Northern Ireland’s largest student accommodation developments, has utilised Brett Martin’s Glass Link rooflight system above one of the building’s atriums. The rooflight has introduced high levels of natural daylight, a key design requirement that has played a role in enhancing student wellbeing, boosting concentration and creating healthy environments for learning and living.

With its blend of red brick, metal cladding, and glass, Nelson Place establishes a visually striking presence. Brett Martin’s 20 fixed module Glass Link rooflight system was selected by the architectural team at Fletcher Joseph after being recommended by the project’s contractor. The aim was to complement the building’s design, whilst introducing natural daylight above the atrium. Manufactured to specific requirements and easy to fit on both new build and refurbishment projects, the Glass Link rooflight allows daylight to flood internal spaces below. Available in special glass options, including solar control, tinted, obscure and self-cleaning, the rooflight offers the ideal solution for commercial projects, including educational applications.

For more information about Brett Martin’s range of rooflights, visit: www.brettmartin.com.

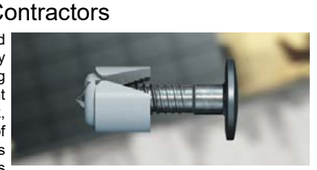
Don’t Cut Corners – Just Nail It with Makita



The new Makita DBN640 LXT® Metal Connector Nailer provides excellent access and visibility due to the combination of its slim nose design and bright LED job light, making tasks easier. The high-performance Makita nailer achieves approximately 1000 shots with a fully charged 18V LXT Li-Ion 6.0ah battery, and due to its pneumatic spring, can drive nails up to 64mm. Also referred to as a positive placement nailer, this new model is suitable for securing metal connectors, the high-powered brushless motor of the new DBN640 Makita LXT Metal Connector Nailer extends the overall battery life and ensures the tool can maintain efficient power and drive nails flush. A reliable LED job light ensures visibility is un-interrupted, with a pre-glow function when the tool is activated and an after-glow once the trigger is released, to allow users to check precise placement.

“The DBN640 18V LXT Metal Connector Nailer is an all-round joy to use as it achieves excellent visibility when nailing metal connectors, even in the most awkward corners and angles,” said Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager. “Furthermore, with its brushless motor design and powerful battery it ensures higher driving power and consistency as well as a longer lifespan for a tool that requires minimal maintenance.” Visit: www.makitauk.com.

Visible Cladding Success - Centre Point Counters the Conflicts Facing Contractors



With up to a dozen rivets required per square metre to retain many types of rainscreen cladding panel, plus the array of equipment needed to complete the task, specialist installers are at risk of making critical errors as well as suffering fatigue or even injury. It is a situation that was crying out for a user-friendly and reliable solution. As Lead Product Manager, Francesca Healy comments: “There was a clear opportunity to innovate in this area and improve outcomes for installers, main contractors and clients. To make the visible fixing of rainscreen cladding panels quicker, easier and safer, SFS has developed the Centre Point system: a self-drilling, threaded fastener with a centring sleeve. The whole process is quicker to carry out, involves fewer tools and operations, and provides a more consistent install. In contrast to traditional practices, the SFS Centre Point solution requires a straightforward screw gun to complete a single operation install that is faster and simpler where the fastener is inserted into the sliding hole and screwed straight in.

Francesca concludes: “The Centre Point solution ensures that the panel OEM’s requirements are fulfilled, while main contractors have the reassurance that their projects are protected against poor panel installation and that project dates are more likely to be met. In the long term, façades are protected against panels failing as a result of being unable to accommodate thermal movement.”

Raise the Roof with Brett Martin’s Marlon Toploc Panel Glazing System



Designed for pitched and curved canopy roofing applications, Brett Martin’s Marlon Toploc panel glazing system is a high-performance solution. Engineered with installers and specifiers in mind, the product offers a streamlined installation process alongside reliable weather resistance, and the system is suitable for cold curving on-site for added design flexibility. Marlon Toploc features modular polycarbonate panels designed with an integrated upright connection profile and Top Cap snap on connection profile to reduce the risk of water ingress, as well as polycarbonate verge and trim profiles which cold-curve with the roofing profile. The thermally insulating multiwall panels offer excellent performance, achieving U-values as low as 1.78 W/m²K. The system is also reversable and can achieve a seamed finish using a polycarbonate snap on connection cap or a seamless surface finish using an aluminium connection profile. Lightweight, quick and easy to install, continuous 12m panel lengths are available, eliminating the need for junctions or stepped details between smaller sheets.

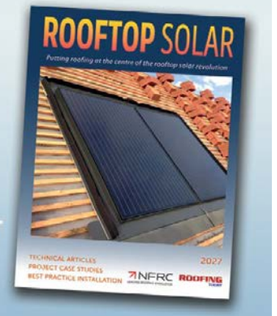
Marlon Toploc is also available in Marlon BioPlus, the lowest carbon option for any new build or refurbishment project offering a carbon saving of up to 97% (LCA A1-3). Find out more at www.brettmartin.com/marlontoploc.



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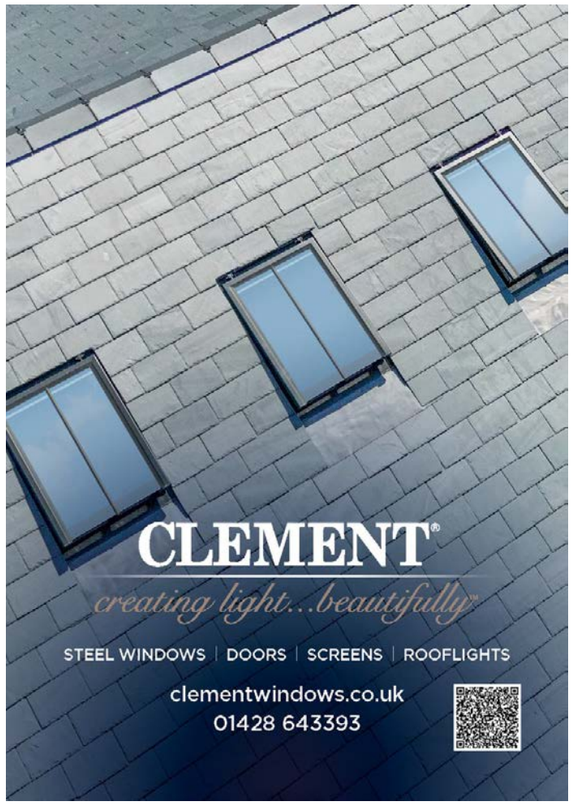
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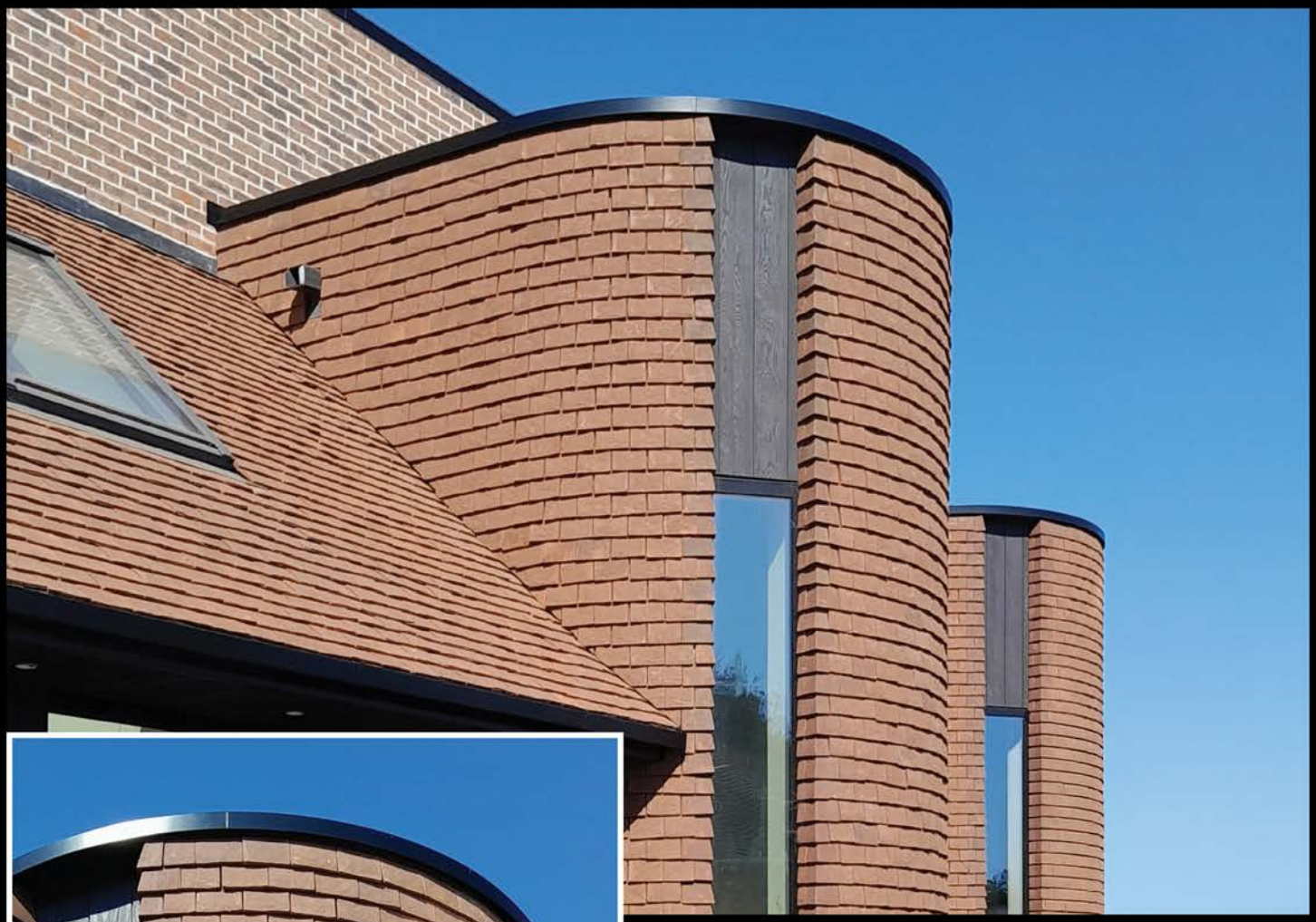
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